

THE
DISTINCTION

BETWEEN

Real and Nominal
TRINITARIANS

EXAMINED,

And the Doctrine of a Real Trinity Vindicated
from the Charge of Trithemism.

IN ANSWER

To a late Socinian Pamphlet,

ENTITLED,

*The Judgment of a Disinterested Person, concerning
the Controversie about the Blessed Trinity, depend-
ing between Dr. S—ch, and Dr. Sherlock.*

W^m Sherlock

L O N D O N.

Printed for William Rogers, at the late, over against
St. Dunstons Church in Fleet Street, 1706.

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The Judgment of a Synod of Bishops
in the year 1854, and the
of the same

LONDON

Printed for William B. E. & Co. 27, Abchurch Lane, E.C. 4
St. Dunstons Church, London, E.C. 4

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ERRATA.

PAGE 15: Marg. for *Genitorem* r. *Esu?dorus*. p. 49. l. 6. for *et*, r. *etc.* p. 63. l. 12. delefor. p. 75. l. 25. for *acti*, r. *calli*.

THE
DISTINCTION
BETWEEN
REAL and NOMINAL
TRINITARIANS,
CONSIDERED.

SECT I.

Concerning Real and Nominal Trinitarians.



HIS Author calls himself a Presbyter of the Church of *England*; and by what I have heard, I fear it is too true: I pray God preserve the Church from such Presbyters, who Eat her Bread, and Betray her Faith.

His pretence for Writing this Pamphlet, is, The Controversy between Dr. *S--th* and Dr. *Sherlock*, about the *B. Trinity*. I will say nothing of that matter, let the Animadverter Answer it to God and his own Conscience;

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This

The Distinction between

This Author has said enough about it, and I wish he had but used the same Candour throughout, and then there would have been no need of this Answer, but tho' it seems he was *Disinterested* as to the contending Doctors, he was deeply *Interested* as to the Cause of *Socinianism*, to which he promised no small Advantage from this Dispute.

And indeed it is too evident, what advantage our *Socinian* Adversaries have made, and hope still to make of this Controversy. This has occasioned that scandalous Distinction between *Real and Nominal Trinitarians*; which is such an open abuse upon the *Nominalists*, that were I one of those whom he Reproaches with that Title, I could not bear it: For the plain *English* of it is no more but this; those who believe a Trinity, and those who believe no Trinity; for *Nominal Trinitarians*, as opposed to *Real Trinitarians*, can signify nothing more. And could this Author, and his Friends, persuade the World, That the greatest part of our Clergy, nay, the Church of *England* it self, as he pretends, are but *Nominal Trinitarians*, their Work were done; for a *Socinian* is a much more honourable Name; and when Men agree in the Faith, it is a vain thing to dispute about Words; And therefore this Author is equally zealous to oppose the Realists, that is, to overthrow the Doctrine of a Real Trinity, and to persuade the Nominalists, that tho' they differ in some peculiar forms of Speech, yet there is no reason they should Quarrel, for their Faith is the same: And this I thought a sufficient Reason to judge over again, the Judgment of this *Disinterested Person*.

I shall pass over the Account he gives of the History of this Dispute, only observing, that Dr. *Sherlock* did not begin it; He wrote against the *Socinians*, without suspecting that he should meet with such furious and bitter Assaults from another Quarter, and yet after such great Provocations as might move a very tame man, he has made no return, which unbecomes a true Christian Spirit in such Cases.

But

But there is one thing wherein this Author has done the Dean right, by acquainting the world, That he has not been the first Broacher of this Heresy (as they call it) of *Three Distinct Infinite Minds and Spirits in the Unity of the Godhead*. He reckons up several others of the same mind, some who appeared before, and some since *his Vindication*, as *Dr. Cudworth*, *Dr. Bull*, the late Archbishop *Tillotson*, the present Bishop of *Glocester*, *Mr. How*, *Mr. J. B. Mr. Bingham*. And I could tell him of many more, as many as do sincerely believe, That God is a Father, and has a True, Real, Subsisting Son, and Holy Spirit.

But yet he himself is sensible, and his *Socinian* Friends, or rather he himself, in some former Pamphlets, has observed very material differences between the Dean's Hypothesis, and some of these Learned Men: He neither owns the *Platonick* Inequality of *Dr. Cudworth*, nor the *Sabellian* Composition and Union of others, but asserts Three Real, Distinct, Coequal, Coeternal Persons; not in one singular and solitary, but in *one numerical Nature and Essence*. But I believe the Dean will heartily thank him for giving him the late Archbishop and *Dr. Bull*, two such Names as will command Reverence, and shelter him from the Imputation either of Novelty or Heresy, at least as to this Point: And it is worth observing, from the example of these two great Men, at what rate some Persons judge of Men and Doctrines. The good Archbishop, by his *Trinitarian* Adversaries, is charged with *Socinianism*, and by his *Socinian* Adversaries with *Tritheism*; and yet he must have very ill luck, if he could stumble upon two such Extremes.

As for *Dr. Bull*, his Learned and Elaborate Defence of the *Nicene* Faith, was printed at *Oxford*, and received with Universal Applause, as it highly deserved: None of them to this day have charged him with the least Heresy, and I believe will not yet venture to do it. And yet, as this

Writer confesses, and as every unprejudiced Reader must own, the Doctrine of the Defence as to this Point, is the very same with the Dean's Hypothesis, which these very Persons have condemned as *Impious and Heretical*. So true is it, *Duo cum faciunt idem, non est idem*. All that this Socinian intended by bringing Dr. Bull into the Fray, was to follow the Blow which the Animadverter and the Oxford Decree had given to a *Trinity of distinct, proper, subsisting, living, intelligent Persons*, (which is all that Dr. Bull, or the Dean assert) by their Charge of *Tritheism*; which he hoped would be a sufficient Answer to that otherwise unanswerable Book, and together with Dr. Bull, would confute all the Fathers at once, on whose Authority he so much relies, and to whom he perpetually appeals; for no Christian must hearken to those men, whatever their Authority be, did they really (as they are unjustly charged) preach Three Gods; and thus he thinks he has got rid of all Antiquity, and of the *Tritheistick Trinity* with it. But still this makes well for the Dean, who will be contented to stand and fall with the Catholick Fathers, and will never desire to be thought more Orthodox than they.

That Dr. Bull asserts a Real, Substantial Trinity, in as high and express Terms as ever the Dean did, is so plain throughout his Book, that it is needless to prove it. All his Arguments suppose this Hypothesis, and are unintelligible without it; and therefore I shall take notice but of one or two particular Passages, whereon, as we shall presently see, this whole heavy Charge of *Tritheism* rests.

He tells us, That *Hypostasis*, both before and in, and after the *Nicene Council*, was used by the Catholick Fathers for Subsistence, or a particular thing which subsists by it self, which, in intelligent Beings, is the same with Person: That in this sense, they taught Father

Denique vocem *ὑποστάσις* aliquoties à priscis Ecclesiæ Doctoribus, etiam qui concilium Nicænum antecesserunt, pro subsistentia, vel pro re singulari per se subsistente, quæ in rebus intellectu præditis idem est quod persona, usurpari multis exemplis constat. Bull. Defens. Fid. Nicæn. p. 182.

ther and Son *ὁ Θεὸς ὁ υἱὸς*, to be two Hypostases; and Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be three Hypostases. And that upon this account *Tertullian*, to assert the Subsistence of the Son against those who denied him to be a distinct Person from the Father, affirms him to be *Substantiam & rem Substantivam*, Substance, and a substantial Being. And having by many irrefragable Instances proved this use of the word to be very Catholick, he adds, That probably this word *Hypostasis* would still have been used in this sense, had not the *Arians* abused it to countenance their Heresy, expounding it to a more general Notion of Essence, Nature and Substance, and teaching, as the Catholick Fathers did, That the Father and Son were two *Hypostases*; but thereby meaning, that they were of a different Nature and Substance, unlike to each other: And that in opposition to them it was, that the *Sardican Council* taught, Father and Son to be *μία ὑπόστασις*, one *Hypostasis*; that is, as they themselves expressly affirm, in the sense of *μία ὁσία*, or one Nature and Essence. We may find a great deal more to this purpose in the same place, in his Vindication of *Origen* from the Objections of *Huetius*, who charges him with denying the Father and Son to be of the same Essence and Substance, or *οὐσιότητες*, because he opposes those who denied the Holy Ghost to have *ἑαυτὰ τινὰ διακρίματα* — *ἐτέραν οὐσίαν ἢ φύσιν* a Substance of his own, distinct from the Father and the Son: whereas that learned man shews, that *Origen* by *ὁσία*, meant no more than *Hypostasis*, in which sense that word is often used among the Ancients; and therefore in opposition to those *Noetian* Hereticks, asserts Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be *τρεῖς ὑπόστασις*, three *Hypostases*, as *Hypostasis* signifies *Rem singularem & individuum per se subsistentem*, quæ P. 190. in iis, quæ vita & intellectu gaudent, idem est quod persona:

Et hoc sensu sine offensione usurpari perseverasset (ut arbitror) vox *ὑπόστασις*, nisi Ariani ipsam abusi fuissent ad propagandam hæresin suam, pro natura & substantia in generali significatione accipientes, ac docentes Patrem & Filium duas esse Hypostases, hoc est, naturas ac substantias diversas, à se invicem discrepantes. *Ibid. p. 188.*

sona: A singular and individual thing, which subsists by it self, which in Beings that have Life and Understanding, signifies a Person: so that Three *Hypostases*, are Three substantial, self-subsisting, living, intelligent Persons.

And tho' the Phrase, of Three Minds, Three Spirits, Three Substances, ought to be used very cautiously, and not without great necessity, when applied to the Holy Trinity, for fear of the *Arian* Notion of Three Substances, yet it is evident how far this learned man is from thinking such Expressions to be *Impious and Heretical*: He expounds Three Hypostases to the very same Sense; and elsewhere quotes that passage of St. *Hilary* concerning the Synod at *Antioch*, as truly Catholick, where in opposition to the *Sabellians*, they assert the Divine Persons in the Trinity, to be *tria in substantia*, or *tres substantias*, three

Page 269.

Sed hæc omnia Catholicum sensum facile admittunt, adeoque postulant— Ad primum quod attinet, potiori jure Pater & Filius, *ſſo ſubſtantia*, a *Methodio* dicuntur, quam *ſſo pſones* five *ſſes*, ab aliis Patribus appellantur, qui pro Catholicis tamen & Orthodoxis in hoc articulo habitus sunt. Scilicet hæ voces omnino personaliter, ut dici solet, accipiuntur ut supra ostendimus. *Bull. Defens. p. 274.*

in Substance, or three Substances. Thus when *Petavius* accuses *Methodius* for calling Father and Son, *δύο δυνάμεις ποιητικῆς*, two Creating and Operative Powers, he answers, That Father and Son might with less offence, and better reason, be called Two Powers by *Methodius*, than Two Natures and Substances, *δύο φύσεις* five *ἕσας*, as they are called by other Fathers, who yet were always accounted Catholick; but such expressions as these must be understood only *personally*, and then they are Orthodox: So that according to this learned man, *Two Personal Natures, Substances, and Powers*, are Catholick Expressions; and this is the very account which Dr. *Sherlock* in his Defence, if he were the Author of it, gives of Three Minds, and Spirits, that he understood it personally, for Three Divine intelligent Persons; and therefore is as Orthodox in these very Expressions, as Dr. *Bull*, and those Catholick Fathers to whom he appeals.

In another place, speaking of some Modern Divines, who allow the Son to be of the Father; considered as a Son, but not as God; that he receives his Person, but not his Essence or Divine Nature of the Father; he observes that we cannot conceive the Person without the Essence, unless by Person in the Divinity, we mean no more than the meer mode of subsistence, which is plain *Sabellianism*.

Addo ego Personam hic sine essentia concipi non posse, nisi statueris Personam in Divinis nihil aliud esse, quàm merum *responsum* unde *quod plane Sabellianum est*, p. 439.

So that this Writer has done Dr. *Sherlock* a greater kindness than he was aware of, and as it will quickly appear, has lost his own Cause by it; if Dr. *Bull* have truly represented the sense of the Fathers, as all learned and unprejudiced men must own he has: For here are such a Cloud of Witnesses to the Doctrine of a Real, Substantial, Subsisting Trinity, as no later Authorities, whatever they are, can stand against.

What I have now quoted, is only what first came to hand, but there is hardly any thing in the whole Book, but what by immediate and necessary consequence, proves the real distinction of proper, subsisting Persons in the Trinity; that each Person is by himself in his own proper Person, as distinguished from the other Two, Infinite Mind, Substance, Life, Wisdom, Power, and whatever is contained in the Notion and Idea of God. Instead of particular Quotations for the proof of this, I shall only Appeal to the Titles of the several Sections of that learned Work, which I believe no man can make common sense of, without acknowledging a Trinity of proper, substantial, subsisting Persons.

The First Section concerns the Preexistence of the Son of God, That he, who afterwards was called *Jesus Christ*, did subsist before his Incarnation, or Nativity, according to the Flesh of the Blessed Virgin, in another and more excellent

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cellent Nature than that of Man; That he appeared to the Holy Men under the Old Testament, as a kind of Anticipation of his Incarnation; That he always presided over, and took care of his Church, which he was to Redeem with his own Blood; That he was present with God his Father before the foundation of the World, and that by him all things were made. This is the Faith of Christians, and this he proves to be the constant Doctrine of all the Catholick Fathers for the first three hundred years, and so it continued to After-ages: Now let any man consider, what a pretty kind of dispute this is, about the Preexistence of the Son, if he have no proper permanent Existence of his own, but considered as a Divine Person, is only another Name for the Father, or an *immanent Act*, like the transient Thought, or transient Act of Reason in Man. For if the Son be not a distinct Person from the Father, and as proper a subsisting Person as the Father himself is, the Question will amount to no more but this, Whether God the Father had a Being before *Jesus Christ* was Born of the Virgin, or before the World was made? Or, Whether he had any *immanent Acts of Wisdom or Reason*, before he made the World? Or, Whether he took the Name of Son upon himself, before he made the World, or made any Creature to know him or his Name. The Christian Fathers were Wiser men than to talk at this impertinent rate; and therefore they did believe, that God had a Son in a true and proper Sense; a subsisting, living, omnipotent Son, by whom he made the World; who appeared in his own proper Person to several of the Patriarchs under the Old Testament; and in the fulness of time, was Incarnate of the substance of the Virgin *Mary*. The very Question it self necessarily supposes this to make Sense of it; much more impossible is it to understand what the Fathers say upon this Argument, upon the *Sabellian* or *Socinian* Hypothesis.

The Second Section concerns the Consubstantiality of the Son with the Father; That the Son of God is not of a created or mutable Essence, but perfectly of the same Divine unchangeable Nature with his Father, and therefore is True God of True God. Now, What Sense can be made of this, if the Son be not as truly and properly Substance in his own Person, as distinguished from the Person of the Father, as the Father is in his own Person? For, How can the Son be Consubstantial, or of the same Substance with the Father, if he be no Substance at all? Especially since this Learned man has proved, That the Catholick Fathers rejected the *Homoouiston* in the *Sabellian* Sense, for one singular Substance of Father and Son, and that they assert, as common Sense would teach us, that nothing is Consubstantial to it self, but *ἕκαστον ἑκάστῳ*, one thing is Consubstantial to another.

The Third Section concerns the Co-eternal Existence of the Son with the Father: Now for Father and Son to Coexist, necessarily supposes, that they both Exist, and actually subsist by themselves; for two cannot Exist and Subsist together, unless each of them actually subsist; For as the Fathers observe, nothing can properly be said to Coexist with it self: For it can admit of no Question, Whether any one has been, as long as he has been: And therefore, since the Co-eternity of the Son has been a very serious Dispute between the Catholicks and the Arians, it is certain, that both of them owned Father and Son to be two distinct Persons, which did distinctly Exist and Subsist.

The Fourth Section teaches the Subordination of the Son to the Father; that tho' the Son be Co-equal with the Father, as having the same Divine Nature with the Father,

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without any change or diminution ; yet he is Subordinate to the Father, as receiving the Divine Nature from him : That the Father is God of himself ; the Son, God of God. Now if the Son receive the Divine Nature by an eternal Communication from the Father, he must have it in himself, in his own Person, and be a living, subsisting Son, true God of God ; and if he be a true proper Person, and subordinate to the Father, he must be a distinct Person, for no Person can be subordinate to himself. These Questions Dr. *Bull* has discoursed at large, with great variety of Learning, and acuracy of Judgment ; and it is a Mystery to me, how those, who pretend to admire Dr. *Bull*, should quarrel with Dr. *Sherlock* ; or that those who pay any reverence to the Catholick Fathers, should quarrel with either of them. This *Socinian*, as I observed before, was glad to draw Dr. *Bull* into the number of *Tritheists*, but by that means he has drawn in all the Catholick Fathers too, and has now drawn together so many *Tritheists*, as he will never know how to get rid of again : or to speak more properly, he has unanswerably Confuted the Charge of *Tritheism*, and discovered the Trick and Mystery of it, by charging the Catholick Faith it self, and all the Catholick Fathers, the most zealous Patrons and Advocates of it, with *Tritheism*.

S E C T II.

*This Author's Account of the Doctrine of the Realists
and Nominalists, concerning the Holy Trinity.*

THE very Name of *Socinianism* is justly abhorred by all Christians, who place all their hopes of Salvation in the Incarnation, Sacrifice, and Intercession of the Eternal Son of God : For if *Christ Jesus*, who is the Saviour

Saviour of Mankind, be not the Eternal Son of God in humane Nature, all those great Assurances, which the Gospel gives us, of God's love to Sinners, in giving his own Eternal Son for us, of the Expiation of our Sins by the Blood of the Son of God, a price of inestimable value, and of all the Blessings which we expect, both in this world and in the next, from the powerful intercession of a Beloved Son, and a meritorious High-Priest; I say, all these strong Consolations dwindle into no more, than the Word and Promise of a great and extraordinary Prophet, the Death of a Martyr, and the Intercession of a Beloved Creature, and humble Supplicant, who has no inherent Power and Authority to save us. Our Modern *Socinians* are very sensible, what an invincible prejudice this is; for few serious Christians will be willing to part with their hopes of Heaven, or to part with greater, infinitely greater hopes for less, or to think so meanly of their Saviour, who is the object of their Faith and Worship, as to thrust him down into the rank and number of meer Creatures. This the Catholick Church would never endure in the *Arians*, who yet attributed a most excellent Nature and Glory to Christ, next to God himself, superior to the highest Orders of Angels, as being before the World it self, and the Maker of it, but yet not true and perfect God, as not having the same Nature with his Father, nor Eternally begotten by him; much less would they ever endure the thoughts of the *Photinian* or *Samosatenian* Heresy, that is, of *Socinianism*, which makes Christ but a meer man, who had no Being before he was Born of his Virgin Mother.

This, I say, being so invincible a prejudice against them, they have of late tried new Arts, and have taken advantage of some very unhappy Disputes, to impose upon unwary men, and to appear abroad with new Confidence under a less frightful Disguise.

The late Controversy about Three infinite Minds and Spirits

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rits in the Trinity, has given them the advantage of distinguishing between *Real and Nominal Trinitarians*, or such *Trinitarians* as believe a Trinity of Real subsisting Persons; and those who believe only one Real Person, who is God, with a Trinity of Names, or Offices, or immanent Acts and Powers. *The Realists*, they call *Tritchiefs*, or such Hereticks, as assert Three Gods. *The Nominals*, they think very *Orthodox*; and the *Church*; and tho' the *Nominals* and *Socinians* differ in some forms of Speech, yet they say, and I think very truly, that there is no considerable difference in their Faith, as they state it, and seem well enough inclined to exchange that odious name of *Socinians*, for the more plausible and popular name of *Nominal Trinitarians*. And thus they can Dispute as heartily as ever, and with more safety and honour, against the Faith of the Trinity, so they do but call it a *Real Trinity*; and may dispute for *Socinianism* as earnestly as ever, so they do but call it a *Nominal Trinity*.

— *En quo discordia cives.*
Perduxit miseros! —

That this is the whole Artifice of this present Pamphlet, any one who reads it, may see with half an eye; and I hope some men, if ever they can grow cool, will consider a little better of it: I do not so much intend gravely to Dispute with this Author, as to wash off his Paint, and bring the Controversy back again to its right Owners, those truly opposite Parties of *Trinitarians*, *Sabellians* and *Socinians*.

That those whom he calls the *Real Trinitarians*, are the only men who believe a Christian Trinity, and that the *Nominal Trinitarians* do not believe a Trinity, is evident in their very Names; for a Trinity, which is the object of our Faith and Worship, is certainly a *Real Trinity*, if it be at all; and one would think, that a Trinity, which is not a Real Trinity, should be no Trinity at all: The Zeal which the *Socinians* express against a Real Trinity, is a good Argument,
That

That that is the true Christian Trinity which they and their Predecessors have always rejected in contradiction to the Catholick Faith; and the great fondness they express for a Nominal Trinity, is as good a proof, that it is no Trinity at all. Such a Trinity as is reconcileable with *Socinianism*, as all these men own a Nominal Trinity to be, can never be the Christian Faith, unless *Socinianism* be Christianity: Which I hope, those men, whom this and some other late Writers call Nominal Trinitarians, will not yet own; and yet if *Socinianism* be a Contradiction to the Christian Faith, that must be the true Catholick Faith of the Trinity, which most directly contradicts *Socinianism* in the parting Points, and that none but a Real Trinity does: So that it is in vain for them to hope to conceal themselves under some insignificant Names; let them deal fairly with the world, and Dispute professedly against a Trinity; for a Real Trinity is neither better nor worse than a Trinity; and then let them produce their Authorities and Reasons to prove, that the Catholick Church, even the *Nicene* Council it self, never believed a Trinity, and that the Faith of a Trinity is *Tritheism*: This becomes men of candour and honesty, let their Opinions be what they will; but to sneak and sculk like men who have a mind to steal a Cause, and are as much ashamed to appear in open light, as such kind of Traders use to be, is mean and pilfering, and unworthy of their Ancestors, who own'd themselves at Noon-day, and bravely outfaced all the Authority of the Catholick Church, and all the Reason of Mankind.

That this is the truth of the Case, and that they themselves look upon this distinction as no more than a jest, is evident from that account this Writer gives of the Doctrine of the *Realists* and *Nominalists* concerning the Trinity.

"As to the Explication, the Party called *Realists* say, The judgment of the Holy Trinity, or the Three Divine Persons, are of a distinct person. p. 12.
 "Three distinct infinite Substances, Three Minds, Three Spirits

" Spirits ; they are Three such Persons ; that is, as distinct,
 " and as really subsisting and living, as three Angels, or three
 " Men are. Each Person has his own peculiar individual
 " Substance, his own personal and proper Understanding,
 " Will and Power of Action ; an Omnipotence, Omniscience,
 " and all other Divine Attributes, divers in number from the
 " personal Omnipotence, Omniscience, &c. of the other two
 " Persons. In the Creation, as also in the Government of the
 " world, they are to be considered as distinct Agents, not as
 " one Creator, or one Governor, but only in this sense, that the
 " Father acts by the Son through the Spirit : of which the
 " meaning is, that the Father, in regard of his Paternal Prero-
 " gative, acteth not immediately, but by the Son and Spirit.

This Account, as far as it concerns the real Subsistence
 of Three distinct infinite Persons in the Unity of the God-
 head, does contain the true Catholick Faith of the Trinity ;
 and yet he has both imperfectly and falsely represented the
 Opinion of the *Realists*.

1. He tells us, *They say that the Holy Trinity, or the Three
 Divine Persons, are Three distinct infinite Substances, Three
 Minds, Three Spirits.* Now any one would hence conclude,
 That this is the Universal Doctrine of all the *Realists*, and
 that this Phrase of *Three Substances, Minds, and Spirits*, is the
 Parting point between the *Realists* and *Nominals* : That
 all who believe a Real Trinity, own Three Infinite Minds and
 Spirits ; and that no man can believe a Real Trinity, who
 does not own this. Now this is manifestly *false*, as our late
 Experience proves. The greatest number of *Realists*
 (as far as I can guess) who believe a Real Trinity, a
 Real subsisting Father, a Real subsisting Son, and a Real
 Subsisting Holy Spirit, do yet reject those Expressions of
Three Infinite Minds and Spirits, which are liable to a very
 Heretical Sense, either *Arianism*, or *Tritheism* ; and there-
 fore were very sparingly, and with great Caution used by
 the Catholick Fathers, tho' they used *Three Hypostases* in
 the

the very same Sense, and did not condemn Three Natures and Substances when *personally* used, as we have seen above. And therefore the late Dispute about *Three Minds*, does not in it self divide the contending Parties into *Realists* and *Nominals*, as the *Socinians* too hastily conclude, and think to carry their Cause by it. Very good Catholicks may dispute such expressions, as we know they did the *Homouosion* it self; for *One Substance* is as liable to an Heretical Sense, as *Three Substances*: for that may be *Sabellianism*, and the other may be *Arianism* or *Tritheism*, and both of them rightly understood may be very Orthodox; but whether they are or no, must be judged by the Sense in which they are used; and the Catholick Fathers, like good Christians, have easily yielded to each other in a dispute of words, when it has appeared that the difference has been only in words, not in the Faith. What *Athanasius* says upon a like occasion, is a very good Rule to maintain Christian Peace and Unity. To corrupt the Faith is always unlawful, tho' we palliate it with the most popular and orthodox forms of speech: but a true and holy Faith does not degenerate into Impiety and Heresy by some new improper expressions, while he who uses such words, has a Pious and Orthodox sense.

Τὸ μὴ ἀποθεῖν παντελῶς
κακῶν, καὶ πικρίοις ῥή-
μασι καὶ πημανοῖς σφίσμασι
περιάλλειν αὐτὸ πρὸς ἐπιχειρή-
σιν τὸ ὅ ἐνυστέειν ὅσον ἑξ
πάντων ὁμολογῶν, καὶ ζαν-
ζίστως λέγειν πρὸς χήσιν,
ὡς μόνον ὁ λόγος ἐνυστέειν
ἔχει τὸ φρόνημα Ath. de-
cret. Syn. Nic. p. 267.

But to proceed. Tho' all *Realists* do not agree about the use of those words, Three Minds or Substances; yet they all do, and all must agree in what follows, *viz. They are Three such Persons, that is, as distinct, and as really subsisting and living, as three Angels, or three Men.* They are so without doubt, if they be real proper Persons; for a Person lives and subsists, and Three Persons must be really distinct, or they can't be Three; that is, the Father's Person is no more the Person of the Son, nor the Person of the Son the Person of the Father, than *Peter* is *John*, or *John* is

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is *Peter* ; but then they do not subsist dividely, or separately, as *Peter* and *John* do. He adds, *Each Person has his own peculiar individual Substance, his own personal and proper Understanding, Will, and Power of Action; an Omnipotence, Omniscience, and all other Divine Attributes, divers in number from the Personal Omnipotence, Omniscience, &c. of the other Two Persons.* Now I except against nothing in this, but the Phrases of *peculiar and individual substance, and divers in number* ; for *peculiar and individual*, I would say a *singular substance* : for tho' a *singular substance* in created Natures is a peculiar and individual substance also, it is not so in the Divinity. The Catholick Fathers always distinguish'd between *One Substance*, and *One singular Substance* of the Godhead. To deny *One Substance*, or the *Homoonfion*, was *Arianism* : To assert *One singular Substance*, was *Sabellianism* ; for *One singular Substance* is but *One Person*, which denies a *Trinity of Persons* : But the Divine Nature and Substance is both *μία* and *κοινή*, *One and Common*, and therefore not *One singular Substance*, which can never be common ; and by the same Reason, a *Personal Substance*, though it be singular, and appropriate to such a particular Person, and therefore as incommunicable as the Person is, yet it is not *peculiar and individual* in the common acceptance of those words, but the same *One common undivided inseparable Essence* of the Divinity, subsisting distinctly and singularly in each Person. Thus for the same Reason, I will not say, that the *Personal Omnipotence, &c.* of the Father, is *divers in number* from the *Personal Omnipotence* of the Son, because it is the same *One Omnipotence*, as it is the same *One Divinity*, which subsists distinctly in each Person ; but we may and must say, That the *Personal Omnipotence* of the Father, is not the *Personal Omnipotence* of the Son, no more than the *Person* of the Father, is the *Person* of the Son. But this disguised *Socinian* has taken great care in representing the Doctrine of

of the *Realists*, to conceal their Faith of the perfect undivided Unity and Identity of the Divine Nature in Three distinct subsisting Persons, which yet he knows they as Sacredly profess, as they do the real distinction of Persons, and is owned in as high terms by Dr. *Sherlock* himself, as by any of his Adversaries, and is almost the only Pretence of those many Contradictions he is charged with, by such as will not understand a perfect distinction in perfect Unity, which yet is essential to the Catholick Faith of a Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity. But as for this Author, whether he had thought such a Distinction and Unity reconcileable or not, yet when he undertook to represent the Doctrine of the *Realists*, he ought to have represented it whole and entire, and to have left it to the judgment of the Reader : whereas he is very careful to observe that they say, the Three Persons in the Trinity are Three Substances, Three Minds, and Spirits ; [which yet only some of them say,] but takes no notice that these Three distinct Persons have One undivided Nature and Essence, which they all agree in : For this would have spoiled his Objections of *Tritheism*, and what he immediately adds about Three Creators and Governors of the World, which they never owned, any more than Three Gods ; for tho' there are Three who are Omnipotent, and Three who create, yet they are so inseparably united in Nature, that they are but One Agent, One Omnipotent, and produce but One Effect : As the Catholick Fathers concluded for this Reason, that as the Scripture teaches us, That there is but One God, and yet that the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God ; so it attributes the making and government of the world both to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and yet there is but one and the same world which is made and governed ; which proves, that though they act as distinctly as their Persons are distinct, yet there is such an essential Unity of Will and Power, and Operation,

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from the indivisible Unity of Nature, that they are but one Agent, and produce but one and the same effect.

But still as for the main of the Charge, That every distinct Person in the Trinity, has a personal Substance, Life, Will, Understanding, Power, of his own, which is not the personal Substance, Life, Will, Understanding, Power, of either of the other Persons, is what all, who believe a Real Trinity, do and must agree in, whether they will agree to call these Three Substances, Wills, Understandings, &c. or not. Nay, this is all that those very Persons who assert Three Substances, Three Minds and Spirits in the Trinity, ever meant by it. Own but each Person in his own proper Person, to be infinite Substance, Mind, Spirit, and that neither Person is each other, and they will consent to any other form of words, and not dispute the reason or propriety of them; all that they contend for is a real Trinity of true, real, proper Persons; and that they are certain cannot be, unless each Person by himself, as distinct from the other Persons, be Substance, Mind, Spirit, Will, Understanding, Power.

This is the only Trinity which *Socinus*, *Crellius*, *Slichtingius*, and others of that Party, have hitherto disputed against; and therefore certainly they did apprehend, that the Christians in their days, even all the Divinity-Chairs of *Europe*, did assert such a Trinity; and those Learned Men who opposed them, did believe so too, or there must be very wise doings amongst them: tho' our Modern *Socinians* have now made a discovery, that these *Realists* are not the true *Catholick Trinitarians*, but that the *Nominalists* are the Church; and now they are grown Friends with the Church, and Orthodox, beyond their own hopes; and their business is only to defend the Church against this new Sect of *Real Trinitarians*. Let it be so: but still they maintain the same Doctrine that *Socinus* did, and dispute against the same Trinity which he disputed against, and therefore these *Real*

Trini-

Trinitarians are no new upstart Sect, but their old Adversaries, who will never be cheated by new Names into an accommodation or comprehension with *Socinians*.

The plain state of the Case is this: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are the Christian Trinity; now the question is, whether this be a Real Trinity or not; that is, whether the Father be an Eternal, Infinite, Living, Omniscient, Omnipotent, subsisting Person, and did truly beget of his own Nature and Substance, a True, Living, Omnipotent, Omniscient, subsisting Son; and in like manner, whether the Holy Ghost proceeds from Father and Son, a True, Living, Omnipotent, Omniscient, subsisting Spirit. This is the Doctrine of those whom our Modern *Socinians* call *Realists*, that is, of True and Orthodox *Trinitarians*; and without asserting this, whatever they teach besides, a Trinity is nothing but a name, and therefore such men may properly be called *Nominalists*; so that the *Realists* only are *Trinitarians*, the meer *Nominalists*, whatever they are else, are no *Trinitarians*; and this new contrivance of opposing these Real *Trinitarians*, is neither better nor worse than opposing the Doctrine of the Trinity: And let but our People understand this, and we are where we were, and then the *Socinians* may call themselves *Nominalists*, or what they please.

To proceed: He is as artificial and unsincere in his account of the *Nominalists*, as of the *Realists*. *We must not* p. 13.
conceive of the Divine Persons, say the Nominalists, as we do of created Persons. Very right! there is an unconceivable difference between them, as all *Realists* acknowledge, they are perfectly distinct, but yet inseparably One; they never did, never can subsist apart; the same One undivided Divinity subsists whole and perfect, and yet distinctly in each of them, and is as perfectly One in Three, as any one thing is one with it self. And thus we allow what he adds to be a very great Truth, and wish he himself would consider better of it: *That the conception we ought to have of their Personalities,*

nalities, or what they are as they are Persons, is as different from the Personalities of any created Beings, as the Perfections of the Divinity are paramount to Human or Angelical Perfections. This we are sensible of, and therefore do not presently cry out of Nonsense and Contradiction, when we are forced by Scripture and Reason to attribute such things to the Divine Nature and Persons, as we can find no Images or Idea's of in Created Nature : for we know that Creatures cannot be perfectly like to God, and consequently we ought not to oppose the Idea's of Nature to Revelation. But the present question is not, Whether Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are such Persons as created Persons, as Angels, or men are; for it is certain there is an unconceivable difference between them; but whether they may be called Persons in the true and proper Notion of the word *Person*; for one who does really and substantially subsist, live, will, understand, act, according to his Natural Powers: And whether there be Three such subsisting, living, willing, understanding Persons in the Godhead, or only One : Whether as the Father hath life in himself, so the Son hath life in himself; and as the Father knows the Son, so the Son knows the Father; and whether the Spirit of life, and the Spirit of Holiness, and Power, and the Spirit that searcheth the deep things of God, be not a subsisting, living, knowing, working Spirit; and this is the reason, why the Church calls them Three Persons, (which the Scripture does not call them) because the Holy Scripture distinctly Attributes life, will, knowledge, power, to these Three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; which is the Notion all men have of a Person when applied to Creatures; and to talk of Three Divine Persons, who are not subsisting, living, knowing Persons, destroys the only Reason for calling them Persons.

But he adds, as the Doctrine of the *Nominalists*, That God is but One Being, but One Substance, Mind, or Spirit, with One only will, understanding, energy, or power of action. But is

is not this, in a true Catholick Sense, the Doctrine of the Realists also, as I observed before? But this is what this *disinterested Person* would be at; to distinguish the Realists and Nominalists by *Three Substances* and *One Substance* of the Divinity: And were this the whole Truth, the Realists would certainly be Hereticks, and the Nominalists might be the Orthodox Church: Whereas the Realists, as they own Three real subsisting living Persons, so they as constantly profess the *Homounson*, or One undivided Substance and Nature, subsisting and acting distinctly, but indivisibly and inseparably in Three, which is a real perfect subsisting Trinity in perfect Unity: But the Nominalists, truly so called, as they own but One Substance in the Divinity, so but One single Person, which is their One God, and can find a Trinity only in a Trinity of Names, or Properties, or meer immanent Acts.

That there are many such Nominalists among us, I fear is too true; but I must say again, that the bare dispute concerning the use of those words, *Three eternal infinite Minds and Spirits*, for *Three eternal infinite intelligent Persons*, no more proves those who reject such expressions, while they own each Person by himself, to be infinite Mind and Spirit, to be meer Nominalists, than the use of such expressions in a qualified Catholick Sense, (as the Catholick Fathers have formerly used them, or other Terms equivalent to them) proves those who use them to be *Tritheists*: And yet this is all our Author pretends to justify this distinction between *Realists* and *Nominalists*, viz. *The Controversy depending between Dr. S—th and Dr. Sherlock*. But I cannot pass on without making one Remark on this, That Dr. S—th, and those who have espoused that side of the Question, are as much concerned to vindicate themselves from the imputation which this Author has fixed on them, of being meer *Nominalists* or *Sabellians*, as Dr. Sherlock and his Friends are, to vindicate themselves from *Tritheism*; and I confess, I think, a great deal more; because in the heat of Dispute, or through Inadvertency, if it be not their settled Principle and

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and Judgment, they have given more just occasion for such a Charge. When One and the same Person, with Three substantial Deaneries, shall be very gravely alledged as a proper Representation of a Trinity in Unity; when a meer mode of subsistence shall be given as a proper and adequate Definition of a Person, as applied to the Trinity; when a large Book shall be writ on purpose to demonstrate, That there is and can be but One Person in the Trinity, in the true proper Notion, as it signifies an *intelligent* Person; what can the most equal and impartial Judge make of this, but downright *Sabellianism*? For, whether it be allowable to say, Three Minds and Spirits or not, I'm sure without owning Three proper, subsisting, intelligent Persons, each of whom is in his own Person, infinite Mind and Spirit, there can be no Real Trinity. If their Sense be more Orthodox than their Words, I do heartily beg of them for God's sake, and the sake of our common Faith, so to explain their Words, as to remove this scandal, as Dr. *Sherlock* has done, and not to Charge a Trinity of real, subsisting, intelligent Persons, (which is all he professes to own, or ever to have intended) with *Tritheism*, till they can give us something in the room of it more Orthodox than a *Sabellian* Trinity, which the Catholick Church has always rejected with Abhorrence.

S E C T III.

The Authorities of the Nominalists against a Real Trinity, briefly Examined.

THis *Socinian* having given such an account as it is, of the Doctrine of the *Realists* and *Nominalists*, as *disinterested* as he pretends to be, he professedly Espouses the side of the *Nominalists* against the *Realists*; that is, under a new Name he follows his old Trade of Disputing against the Trinity; only with this advantage, that he now pleads the

Cause

Cause of the Church, of his beloved Church of *Nominalists*, against these *Tritheistick* Hereticks, the *Realists*: But when men consider, who this Advocate is, it will do the *Nominalists* no Credit, nor any Service to the Cause; For a *Socinian*, tho' he change his Name, will be a *Socinian* still, that is, a professed Enemy to the Catholick Faith of the Trinity, and to the Eternal Godhead and Incarnation of our Saviour Christ; and there is very good Reason to believe, that what he opposes is the True Catholick Faith, and what he vindicates and defends is Heresy. What Agreement there is between the *Nominalists* and *Socinians*, and what an easie accommodation may be made between them, we shall hear towards the Conclusion; but this will not satisfy our Author, that the present Orthodox Church (which to the reproach of the Church, and to the advantage of his own Cause, he will have to be all *Nominalists*, which is such an abuse as concerned Persons ought to resent; I say, not satisfied that the present Church) is on his side; nothing will serve him less, than to prove, that this was always the Faith of the Catholick Church: A brave and bold Undertaking, but what his wiser Predecessors, *Socinus*, *Crellius*, &c. would have laugh'd at; and which I doubt not but he Laugh's at himself, and will have cause to Laugh, if he can meet with any Persons soft and easy enough to believe him.

He well and truly observes, that this Question, *What has* Page 14, *been the Doctrine of the Catholick Church in this point, must be decided by Authorities or Witnesses*, and therefore he appeals to Authorities, and those I grant the most venerable Authorities and Witnesses that can be had, even *General Councils*. I wish he would continue in this good humour, and then I should not doubt but he would quickly change his side: But this is contemptible Hypocrisy in a man, who despises all Authorities, not only human, but sacred, when they contradict his own private Reasonings, to appeal to Authority: I can easily bear with men of weak Understandings, but I hate Knavery; for Truth needs no Tricks: and how much *Socinians* value Fathers and Councils is sufficiently known. He

He begins with the *Nicene Council*, which brought into the Church the term *Homoousios*; by which is meant, that the Divine Persons have the same Substance, or are of One Substance: But then he says, it is disputed between the *Nominalists* and *Realists*, in what Sense the Council understood this One Substance; *Whether the same Substance in number, the self-same Substance? so that there is indeed, but One Divine Substance: Or the same Substance for kind, sort, or nature, namely the same in all Essential Properties — So that in Truth, there are Three distinct (or numerically different) Substances, which are the same only in nature and kind.* This he makes the Controversy between the Church (that is, his *Nominalists*) and the *Realists*; but this is far from being the true state of the Controversy: All whom he calls *Realists*, own, that Father and Son are but One and the self-same Substance, communicated whole and undivided from Father to Son, so that the Father is Substance, the Son Substance in his own Person, and both the same Substance; And the like of the Holy Spirit, that as *Marius Victorinus* says, They are *ter una Substantia*, Thrice One and the same Substance; and this is all that those mean, who venture to say, they are *Three Substances*; for the Dispute between those *Realists*, who say there is but one Substance of the Divine Persons, and those who own Three, is not whether the Son be true and real Substance in his own Person, as distinct from the Person of the Father; for all but *Sabellians* agree in this; but whether considering the perfect Unity and Identity of Nature and Substance in Three, it be Orthodox to say, Three Substances, and not rather One Substance, and Three who subsist; which is a more Orthodox form of speech, and less liable to exception: And thus we allow, That the *Nicene Fathers*, by the *Homoousion*, did mean One and the self-same Substance of Father and Son, but so that the Son is a true and proper Son, a real subsisting Person, Substance of his Fathers Substance; *God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, Begotten not Made, of one Substance with the Father, by whom all things were made*; which

To expressly declares the Sense of the Council, that this Author durst not so much as mention, *God of God, Light of Light, &c.* which can never be reconciled with his Notion of One Substance, which leaves no Substance, nor any real subsistence to the Son distinct from the Father.

It is a bold stroke, and worthy of our Author, to make the *Nicene Council* determine for *Sabellianism*, in the term *Homoousios*; but yet he has a little Story, which he thinks proves it beyond exception, for which he quotes *Socrates*: That *Historian* tells us, That there happened a great quarrel in *Egypt* about the word *Homoousios*, which he says was like fight-

Socr. H. E.
l. i. c. 13.

ing in the dark, without distinguishing Friends from Enemies; for neither of them seemed to understand each other, as to those matters for which they reproached one another: This our Author takes no notice of, for it would not serve his purpose; it appearing from hence, that the Accusations on both sides were causeless, and like dealing blows in the dark: But now our Author begins. *Those Fathers of the Council that were against the term Homoousios*, (but *those Fathers of the Council* are not in *Socrates*, but only *those who declined the term Homoousios*; but the *Fathers of the Council* served his purpose better, and therefore he makes bold with the *Historian*) or of *One Substance*, (which the *Historian* has not added neither) accused such as were for it, as *Sabellians* and *Montanists*, (but the *Historian* says, did suppose that those, who received that Term, did introduce the Doctrine of *Sabellius* and *Montanus*, that is, that this was their design in using that Term, which as he observed before, was their mistake) calling them also blasphemous, because they seemed to take away (by that word) the real Existence of the Son of God: While on the other hand, they that stood for *Homoousios*, believed that such as were against it, did introduce more Gods, and therefore detested them, as reviving Paganism. Here our Author leaves off; but I shall go on with the History.

Eusebius Bishop of Antioch, accuses *Eusebius Pamphili*,

as Adulterating the *Nicene Faith* ; *Eusebius* denies, That he in the least departed from the *Nicene Faith*, and accuses *Eustathius* of *Sabellianism* : And thus they wrote against each other as Adversaries, and yet both of them Taught, That the Son of God was a true and proper Person, and had a real Subsistence of his own ; and that there was One God in Three Persons ; that one would wonder whence it came to pass that they could not agree.

From this Story, our Author thus Reasons. “ This is a deciding-testimony in the Case. For the *Realists* will never “ be able to shew, that if by *Homoousios* the Council intended “ Three distinct Substances, Three Beings, Minds, or Spirits : “ How the Fathers of the Council could be accused of *Montanism* and *Sabellianism* ; for Three intellectual infinite “ Substances, Three Divine Beings, Spirits or Minds, was the “ Doctrine chiefly opposed by *Sabellius* and *Montanus*, as all “ confess : (Then by his own Confession, his *Nominalists* are *Sabellians*, and all those Fathers and Councils which Condemned *Sabellius* were *Realists*, and then we have got the *Nicene Council* again.) “ And on the other hand, the Council which contrived and defended *Homoousios*, could as little Censure those who were against it as introducers of “ *Tritheism* and *Paganism*, if it had not been supposed, that “ in opposing *Homoousios*, they professed to believe Three “ infinite Substances in number, Three Divine Minds, and “ Spirits ; which is the very Doctrine of the Modern *Realists*.

i. Now in answer to this, I observe first, That the Historian says all this was an angry mistake, (as angry men are very apt to mistake, and to reproach each other with their own mistakes) but neither of these Parties were guilty of the Heresies they were charged with ; neither the one were *Sabellians*, nor the other *Tritheists* ; Now this I think proves the direct contrary to what he concludes from it : For if those who were charged with *Sabellianism* for owning the *Homoousion* were not *Sabellians*, then it is certain, that they did not think, that the *Nicene Council* by the *Homoousion*, or

One Substance, meant *One singular Substance*, for that is *Sabellianism*: And when those who professed the *Homousion*, and were no *Sabellians*, charged those who rejected the *Homousion*, with *Tritheism*, they must believe, That the *Nicene Homousion* is neither *Sabellianism* nor *Tritheism*, but the middle between both; such a Unity and sameness of Substance, as is neither a *Sabellian* singularity, nor a *Tritheistick* diversity and multiplicity of Substances; that is, where Father and Son are in their own Persons, as distinct from each other, infinite Substance, and yet but one Substance, One of One, God of God, Light of Light. This is the Medium which *Socrates* tells us they both agreed in; and therefore wondered how they should come to differ; That the Son of God was a true and proper Person, and had a real Subsistence of his own; and that there was One God in Three Persons.

Ἀμφότεροι τὸ λέγοντες
ὁμοούσιον τὸ καὶ ἐνυπάρχοντα
καὶ ἕτερον ἢ τὸ Θεῶν, ἵνα τὸ Θεὸν
ὡς πᾶν ἡμεῖς αὐτοὺς ἢ ὁμο-
λογῶμεν.

2. But if by *Homousios* the Council intended Three distinct Substances, (that is, according to our Sense, Three, each of which is true and perfect Substance, and yet but One Substance) How could the Fathers of the Council be accused of *Montanism* or *Sabellianism*? Had he consulted Dr. Bull, he would have learnt the difference between these two; but let that pass: He phrases this, as if he would insinuate, That the Council it self was accused of *Sabellianism* for this Term; which is false. But this word *Homousios* had sometimes been abused to a *Sabellian* Sense, tho' the Council did not use it in that Sense; and some men might still conceal their Heresy under the Covert of an Orthodox Word; For this Reason, some who professed the *Nicene* Faith, yet disliked the *Homousion*; and when this Dispute had heated them, it was too natural to charge those, who from the Authority of the *Nicene* Council defended the use of that word, with such secret Heretical Senses as they thought that word chargeable with: And this is the whole Truth of the Case, as *Socrates* tells us; and this is a very strange way to prove the Sense of the Council, from the groundless accusations of angry and jealous men.

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3. But how could the Council, which contrived and defended *Homoeousos*, censure those who were against it, as introducers of *Tritheism* and *Paganism*, which the Historian witnesses that it did with great earnestness? But *Socrates* (his Historian) says not one word of the Council, but only of these angry Disputants censuring and accusing each other, and both unjustly; but he would fain ascribe all this to the Council, because it is not Fathers, but Councils he relies on; of which more presently.

But there may be a very good Reason given, why those who rejected the *Sabellian* Unity and Singularity of the Divine Essence, might yet charge those with *Polytheism* who rejected the *Homoeousion*, or *Consubstantial*; and there may be two accounts given of it. 1. That they suspected them of *Arianism*, in opposition to which, the Council taught the *Homoeousion*; one Sense of which was Such a sameness of Nature, as is between Father and Son, which in Creatures we call a specifick sameness, in contradiction to the *Arians*, who taught, That the Son was of a different Nature and Substance from the Father, as different from God the Father, as a created and uncreated Nature differ; and this is downright *Polytheism* and *Paganism*; for this makes the Son and Holy Spirit, how excellent soever their Natures are, but meer Creatures: And for this Reason we know, the Catholick Fathers charged the *Arians* with *Pagan Polytheism* and *Idolatry*; And the *Arians* at that time were such zealous opposers of the *Homoeousion*, even while they concealed themselves under some other Catholick forms of Speech, that it was too great a reason to suspect those of *Arianism*, who denied the *Homoeousion*, whatever they would seem to own besides: and when men are angry, less reasonable suspicions than these, are thought sufficient to form an Accusation; and this is one fair account of it: Such men were thought secret *Arians*, and therefore charged with *Polytheism*.

2. But there was another Notion of the *Homoeousion*, which the Catholick Fathers thought absolutely necessary to the Unity of God, and consequently that the denial of it would in-

introduce three Gods, instead of three Divine subsisting Persons in the Unity of the same Godhead: And that is, That when the Son is said to be *Homousios*, or Consubstantial with the Father, the meaning is, that he is, *ἐξ ἑοίας*, of the very Substance of the Father, and not of any other created or uncreated Substance: This St. *Basil* is positive in, That Two, who are of the same Substance for Kind, are not therefore Consubstantial, as Father and Son, but are rather Brethren, unless one be of the other: But now many true Catholicks very much suspected this Term, because it seemed to imply a Division and Separation of the Father's Substance; for, How can the Son be of the same Substance with the Father, without a division of the Father's Substance? The *Nicene* Fathers answered, That the very Name of Son, and the natural Notion of Generation, did necessarily prove, that the Son must be of the Father's Substance; but then the absolute purity and simplicity of the Divine Essence, which is a perfect indivisible *Monad*, proves, That this eternal Generation of the Son, can't be by a division of Substance, as it is in human Generations; but is whole of whole, in an ineffable and incomprehensible manner, so as no Creature can understand; which is no great wonder, when we can understand so little of Creature Generations, especially when Creation it self is as perfectly unaccountable as the Eternal Generation; for we can no more understand, how the World was Created of nothing, than how the Son was Begotten of his Father's Substance, whole and perfect, without any division or separation: That the whole Divine Essence is originally in the Father, and communicated whole to the Son, subsists whole and distinctly in Both, and is One in Both.

This is that sense of the *Homousion*, which occasioned so many warm Disputes between the Catholicks themselves; for this reason, that Party which rejected the *Homousion*, accused those, who received it, of *Sabellianism*, because they asserted, That there was but One and the same Substance in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which was the Heresy of *Sabellius*;

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bellius ; and the heat of Dispute would not suffer them to see how vastly the Catholick *Homoussians* and *Sabellians* differed, tho' they both asserted but *One Substance* : for the *Sabellians* asserted but *One* single Substance, which is but *One* real subsisting Person ; and therefore made Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but *Three* Names of the same Person : But the Catholicks asserted *Three* real subsisting Persons, who were Substance, Substance, and Substance, and yet but *One* of *One*, the perfect same of the perfect same : *Una substantia non unus subsistens* ; *One* substance, not one that subsists ; and therefore generally rather called them *Three* Subsistences, than *Three* Substances ; not but that they owned each Subsistence to be a Substance, but they were in the common acceptation of the word not *Three* Substances, but *One* Substance, really and actually subsisting *Thrice*, which they allowed to be *One*, and *One*, and *One*, but not *Three*.

On the other hand, those who received the *Homoussion*, accused those who rejected it, of *Polytheism* and *Tritheism* : for in truth, to deny that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are so of one substance, that the Son receives his whole substance of the Father, and that the Holy Ghost receives his whole substance of Father and Son, is to make them *Three* absolute, independent, self-originated substances, which have no relation to each other ; *Three* such as the Father is, who is of no other but himself, and the Catholick Fathers always accused this of *Tritheism* : τρεῖς πατέρες, *Three* Fathers, was the same to them, as to say *Three* Gods ; and they vindicated the Doctrine of a real subsisting Trinity, against the *Sabellian* and *Arian* Charge of *Tritheism*, by saying, That they did not own *Three* Fathers, but only *One* Father, *One* Self-originated Divinity, which communicates his own substance to the Son ; and therefore they are not *Two* Gods, but God of God.

But now these good Fathers, tho' they were right in the Notion of *Tritheism*, and in the *Nicene* Notion of the *Homoussion*, yet they wrongfully accused those, who rejected that term

term, of *Trisbeism*; for they owned that the Son was of the Father; that all that the Son was, he was of the Father; that he was *God of God, Light of Light*, and therefore not an absolute Self-originated God, but One God with the Father; but they did not like those terms of *Consubstantial*, and *One Substance*, and of *the Father's Substance*, as having something too material in their conception, and sounding harsh, as if the Son were part of the Father's substance; which was objected against the *Homoousion* in the *Nicene Council* it self, which yet disclaimed all such absurd senses, and received the term as the most infallible Test against *Arianism*: But tho' the Authority of the Council over-ruled the generality of Christians; yet some, who were truly Catholick and Orthodox in the Faith, could not digest it; and this was the true occasion of this dispute, and these mutual fierce accusations; and let our Author now make the best he can of it; but instead of doing him service, he will never be able to defend himself against it. After all, our Author was aware of a very terrible Objection against his sense of the *Nicene Homoousion*, for one single *Sabellian* substance and person; viz. that the Catholick Fathers rejected and condemned this sense of it as Heresy, even *Sabellianism*; and it is not probable that these Fathers should not understand the sense of the Council; or that while they contended earnestly for the *Nicene* Faith, they should condemn the true *Nicene* Faith for Heresy, as he owns they do.

This would have put a modest man out of countenance; P. 19. but he takes courage, and huffs at these Fathers and private Doctors: *Particular Fathers are but particular Doctors; 'tis from general Councils only we can take the Churches Doctrine.* It is very provoking to see a man banter the world at this rate, with the utmost contempt and scorn of his Readers: It is plain how great an Admirer he is of General Councils, and what he thinks of his Readers, whom he hopes to persuade, that the Catholick Fathers, who made up the Council, even *Athanasius* himself, who had so great a part in it, did
either

either ignorantly mistake the sense of the Council, or wilfully pervert it; especially when all the *Ante-Nicene* Fathers owned the same Faith, as he may learn from Dr. *Bull*; and those Catholicks, who after the *Nicene* Council, disputed the use of that term *Homoousios*, yet agreed in the same Faith, as I have already shewn.

What follows is all of a piece. He expounds the *Arian Homoioufios*, or of a like Substance, to signify *the same Substance in sort, or kind, or properties*; that is, specifically the same, but only differing in number, as Father and Son have the same specifick Nature, but are Two Persons: And thence concludes, that the *Nicene Homoioufios* which the *Arians* at first refused, but afterwards fraudulently subscribed in the sense of *Homoioufios*, must signify but One singular solitary Substance, but one Person in the *Sabellian* Sense: But who ever before heard, that the *Arian Homoioufion* signified a specifick Sameness and Unity of Nature? Or, that the *Arians* owned Father and Son to have the same specifick Nature as *Adam* and *Abel* had? The Catholick Fathers themselves, as, *Athanasius*, *Hilary*, *Basil*, the two *Gregory's*, &c. owned such a likeness of Nature as this, *ὅτι πάντα ἀπαράλλακτος ὁμοιος*, to be equivalent to the *Homoioufion*, and to be True Catholick Doctrine; and this they asserted against the *Arians*: But it is in vain to dispute with a man, who has either Ignorance or Confidence enough thus to impose upon his Readers.

His next Appeal is to the Sixth General Council, which was the Third of *Constantinople*; and when I met with this, I was not a little surprized to think what he would make of it. This Council, as he himself tells the Story, determined, *That there were two Natural Wills, and two Operations in the Lord Christ*; and the Reason of this was, because they asserted Two Natures in Christ, the Divine and Human Nature; and that each Nature has a Natural Will of its own; and therefore as there are Two Natures, there must be Two distinct and natural Wills in Christ.

This is a plain proof of the Mystery of the Incarnation; that the Divine Nature in the Person of the Son was Incarnate; for there could not be two Wills, unless there were two Natures (which was the foundation of this Decree) in Christ: And this *Macarius* himself in his Confession of Faith profess to own, both in opposition to *Nestorius* and *Eutyches*. Now this Catholick Faith of the Incarnation, which is so often and so expressly own'd by this Council, is utterly irreconcilable with this *Sabellian* Unity of the Divine Nature and Substance, without running into the *Patripassian* Heresy, that the whole Trinity is Incarnate: For if Christ in One Person hath Two Natures, be truly and really both God and Man, and consequently has Two distinct Wills, a Divine and Humane Will; either as God, he must be distinct in Nature and Person from the Father and the Holy Ghost; or if all Three Persons of the Trinity, are but one single solitary Nature, and consequently but One true and proper Person, all Three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, must be Incarnate, and suffer in the Incarnation and Sufferings of Christ, which the Catholick Church condemned as Heresy.

Well! But he tells us, That this Council owned that there is but One Will in the Three Persons of the Trinity, and therefore consequently they can be but one true and proper Person. This we own with the Council, That there is but one essential Will in the Trinity, tho' each Person has a Personal Will: But this he says, cannot be the meaning of the Council, because the question was concerning Natural Wills, or Powers of willing: This is all fallacy. A Natural Will is such a Will as belongs to that Nature, whose Will it is: As a Divine Nature has a Divine Will, and a Humane Nature a Humane Will; the power of willing is

F Personal,

Personal, and signifies a Personal Will: And it is evident, the Council speaks of the first, not of the second: And not to multiply Quotations, I shall give but one plain proof of it. *Theophanes* askt *Macarius* and *Stephen*, Whether *Adam* had a reasonable Soul? They answer, Yes. Then he askt them, Whether he had a natural Will? *Stephen* the Monk answers, That before the Fall he had a Divine Will, Θεὸν Θέλημα. and that he Willed together with God, συνθελητής ὡς τῷ Θεῷ: *Demetrius* calls this Blasphemy; for if he was a Co-Willer, he was a Co-Creator also with God, συνδημιουργός; and others said, that this made *Adam*, ὁμοούσιος, Consubstantial with God; ὁ γὰρ συνθελητής πάντας καὶ δημιουργός; for he, who is a Co-Willer with God, is Consubstantial also: And for this they alledge the Authority of *St. Cyril*, who tells us of *Christ*; That as he is Consubstantial, ὁμοούσιος, so he Wills together with his Father; συνθελητής τῷ Πατρί γενήτορι; and gives this reason for it, μία γὰρ εἶσσι ἐν δυνάμει τὸ θέλημα, that one Nature has but one Will: Now if συνθελητής signifies one who Wills with another, then there must be two who Will; and if these two are One Will, it cannot signify personally, but essentially One: And if they be Consobstantial, have one Substance and one Will in the same Sense, we know what this Council meant by One Substance, no more one personal Substance, than one personal Will.

Labb. Concil.
Tom. 6. p.
760.

His next Authority is the Council of *Lateran*, under Pope *Innocent III.* and though the Christian World is not much beholden to that Council, yet I cannot think, as I find a great many Wise men do, that they have made any alteration in the Substance of our Faith, whatever they have done in the form of Expression.

That

Real and Nominal Trinitarians, &c.

35

That the Trinity is *una summa res*, One Supreme Being, was the Doctrine of St. *Austin*, from whom *Peter Lombard* had it; and all the Catholick Fathers owned the Trinity to be a *most simple Monad*, (which is the same thing) when at the same time they asserted against the *Sabellians*, Three real, subsisting, distinct Persons, each of which is the same whole undivided Divinity, communicated whole and perfect from Father to Son, and from Father and Son to the Holy Ghost, without any division or partition of Substance. And this is the Doctrine of the *Lateran Council*; That this *One Supreme Thing*, is, *αληθώς, veraciter*, truly and really, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; Three United Persons, *τρεῖς ὁμοῦ (ὁμοῦ) πρὸς ὅλην, tres simul Personæ*, and each of them distinct from the others; *ἡ δὲ ὁμοῦ αὐτῶν; ἡ σινγλουλὴν καὶ ὅλην earum*; And therefore there is only a Trinity, not a Quaternity in God, as Abbot *Joachim* had objected; And that each of these Divine Persons is this Divine Substance, Essence, and Nature. All this *Athanasius* himself would have subscribed, who yet with the other Catholick Fathers rejected the Notion of a singular and solitary Divinity.

They add, That this one supreme Nature, Substance, Essence, (which is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) neither begets, nor is begotten, nor proceeds: Nor did ever any Man in his Wits assert, That the Divine Nature and Essence, as common to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that is, That the whole Trinity did either Beget, or was Begotten, or did Proceed; This belongs to Persons, not to Nature formally considered; as they expressly teach, That the Father Begets, the Son is Begotten, and the Holy Ghost Proceeds, so that there is a distinction of

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Persons, and Unity of Nature ; That the Father is *alius*, another, the Son another, the Holy Ghost another ; but not *aliud* another thing : but what the Father is, and what the Son is, and what the Holy Ghost is, τὸ αὐτὸ ὄν, they are all perfectly the same ; that according to the Catholick Faith, we may acknowledge them to be Consubstantial ; for the Father from Eternity Begetting the Son, καὶ ἐαυτὸν ὅταν αὐτὸν ἰδῶν, gave his own Substance to him, as he himself witnesses. *The Father who gave them me is greater than all* : Nor can it be said, that the Father gave part of his Substance to his Son, and retained another part himself ; for the *Hypostasis* or Substance of the Father is indivisible, as being perfectly simple : Nor can we say, That when the Father Begat the Son, he so communicated his own Substance to him, as not to have it himself ; for then he must cease to be an *Hypostasis*, Substance, and a substantial Person himself. So that it is evident, That the Son, when Begotten, received the Father's Substance without any diminution of the Father ; and thus Father and Son have the same Substance ; and Father and Son and Holy Ghost are, τὸ αὐτὸ πρῶτον, one and the same supreme Nature and Substance ; which they call, ἡ τῆς τριῶν ὑπόστασις, the Unity of Sameness and Identity : This is true Catholick Doctrine, and the very Language of the *Nicene* Fathers. And if *Joachim* rejected this Essential Unity of the Trinity, and asserted a meer collective Unity, as many Christians are one Church, as the Council affirms he did, he was very justly Condemned, and the *Nicene* Fathers themselves would have Condemned him. The only thing which looks like an Innovation in this Decree, is, That whereas the Catholick Fathers allowed of those Expressions, *A Begotten Nature, Begotten Substance, Begotten Wisdom, Begotten God*, and that *Substance begets Substance, and*

Wisdom

Wisdom begets Wisdom, &c. This Council denies, That this One supream Divine Essence, Nature, or Substance, which is the Blessed Trinity, does either Beget, or is Begotten, or Proceeds, which some Schoolmen think absolutely condemns those Expressions, That Substance begets Substance; and Wisdom Wisdom; That the Son is *Deus Genitus*, and *Natura Genita*, Begotten God and Begotten Nature, and Begotten Wisdom; which is to condemn all the Catholick Fathers, who used these Expressions without any scruple; nay, who thought that the Mystery of the Divine Generation could not be secured without them. But I confess, I am of *Petavius* his mind, (though I find the Learned Doctor *Bull* dissent from him) that this Council never intended absolutely to condemn all such Expressions, when Personally used; For though the Divine Nature in a general Notion, as common to all Three Persons, neither begets, nor is begotten; yet the Father begets the Son by a true and proper Generation, and a true and proper Son; and therefore that Learned Jesuit tells us, That the *Lateran* Council considered the Divine Nature absolutely, and in it self, and as abstracted from the Three Persons, *Pet. de Trin.* not as subsisting distinctly in each Person; for so it is *l. 6. c. 12.* very Catholick to say, That the Divine Nature in the Person of the Father begets the Divine Nature in the Person of the Son: For we cannot understand what a Person is without its Essence and Nature; and it is absurd to say, That the Son receives his Person from the Father, without receiving that without which he cannot be a Person: And the reason he gives, why they rather chose to say, that the Father begets the Son, than that Essence begets Essence, was to avoid the ambiguity of that Expression, which might signify the production of another Essence, as well as the

Quippe essentia neque sic gignit essentiam, ut ei absolutam existentiam tribuat, neque sic gignitur, ut existat, sed generare, cum ad essentiam pertinet, est generando communicare, gigni est communicari. Filius verè & propriè à Patre gignitur; essentia autem ejus non eodem modo gigni dicitur, sed generatione accipi; vel gignere est dare substantiam, gigni est datam accipere. *Pet. ibid.*

the generation of another Person; whereas this Divine Generation is the communication of the same Eternal Essence which is in the Father to the Son, which gives existence to a second Person, not to a second Nature; This is indeed very subtil, but there is some sense in it; and while they acknowledge, that the Son by an Eternal Generation receives a true Divine Nature from the Father, and is in his own Person true God, but yet not the Father; this is the Old Catholick Faith, how new soever the Expressions may be.

Thus I have done with his General Councils; and I hope every one sees how well he understands Councils, or how honestly he deals with them. What concerns the Church of *England*, needs no answer after what I have already said; and the Story of *Valentinus Gentilis* is much to the same purpose; for he was so far from being a *Realist*, that he was a down-right *Arian*.

But that he may not think himself and his *Nominalists* so secure of all the Divinity-Chairs in *Europe*, I will refer him to the Learned *Spanhemius*, to learn how it lately fared with some of them in the *United Provinces*; who were censured and condemned by various Synods, and by the publick Judgment and Authority of several Universities.

Parcimus hoc loco celebrare in Belgio Theologis, quorum scripta nuper censuerunt, & reprobarunt dogmata variae Synodi federate Belgi.

The first Proposition condemned was concerning the name of Son, and his Eternal Generation of the Father; that this is not to be understood properly of a true and proper Gene-

Generation, as if the Father, who begets, were a true and proper Father; and the Son, who is begotten, a true and proper Son; but that these Terms in Scripture only signify,

1. That the Second Person has the same Nature and Essence with the First Person, and did coexist with him from Eternity: Denying the manner of his having the same Nature, by an ineffable Generation, and the Personal Subsistence of the Father, who begets, and the Son, who is begotten, and consequently that true relation between Father, and Son, which the Scripture constantly teaches, which gave just suspicion either of *Sabellianism*, or *Tritheism*.

2. That all these Names (of Father and Son, begetting, and being begotten, &c.) respect the *Oeconomy* of the Covenant of Grace, the manifestation of the Second Person in the Flesh, as in the visible Image of God, to execute the Mediatorial Office, for which purpose he was given by God the Father: In which sense, to beget, is the same with to manifest; and to be begotten, to be manifested: This he says is coincident with the *Socinians*; and resolved into that Fundamental Error, That the true and proper generation of the Son, though acknowledged ineffable, contradicts those natural Ideas which are imprinted in our minds by God, and are the foundation of all Assent, and all true and certain Knowledge: And that we must

ce, sed & Académica iudicia, etiam publica Auctoritate expressi. Prior in hoc ordine fuit Franckeranus Theologus, Vir acri ingenio, dictione elegant, cuius scripto non uno, etiam vernaculo hæc videntur verba. *Prima* nempe, appellationem *Alitributam* Secundæ Personæ S. Trinitatis, ut & *Generatæ* ex Patre, Non intelligendam esse propriè, ut sic ab orthodoxis, de verâ aliquâ Generatione, æternâ illâ quidem & ineffabili, secundum quam Pater generans sit verè & propriè Pater, & Filius generatus sit verè sit propriè Filius, modo tamen Divinæ Naturæ convenienti. Nihil autem istis vocibus, Patris & Filii, generantis & geniti, innui aliud in Scripturâ S. quam; 1. Quod *Secunda Persona habet eandem cum Primâ Personâ Essentiam & Naturam*, illique ab æterno coexistens: Negato modo illo habendi per ineffabilem Generationem, & sublata Personali illâ subsistentiâ Patris generantis & Filii geniti hinc verâ Relatione qualis perpetuè est, præcipuè in scriptis Novi Testamenti inter Patrem & Filium: Unde vel Sabellianismi, vel Tritheismi cuiusdam, oriri possit suspicio. Nec dubia his minùs, fuerit in *impetibus* Spiritus Sancti quàm est *innotis* Filii. 2. Quod respiciant illa ad *Oeconomiam* Testamenti gratiæ, ad manifestationem in carne Secundæ Personæ, tanquam invisibili Dei Imaginè & ad executionem Officii Mediatorii ad

quod datus est à Deo Patre : Quo sensu *generare* sit idem quod *manifestare*. *Gigni* idem quod *manifestari*, patefieri, citatis locis, *Prov.* 17. 17. 27. 1. *Cont.* 8. 5, &c. quæ coincidunt ferè cum exceptionibus Familiae Socini ad Verba, Hodie genui te, omniumque *πατρὸν Ἰησοῦς* esse videtur : quod repugnet vera illa & propria Generatio Filii ineffabilis licet, Ideis innatis à Deo ipso inditis Menti Humanæ quæ sint principium omnis assensus, omnis veræ ac certæ cognitionis : Nec censendum revelasse Deum quicquam in verbo suo quod non ab homine ad Ideas istas exigi possit & debeat, seu nihil proponere Deum in verbo suo credendum assensu certo & fiduciali, quod non clare & distincte ab homine sana ratione ulso secundum Ideas innatas percipi possit. *Spanhem. Elenchus Controversiarum*, p. 670. &c.

not think that God has revealed any thing in his Word, which cannot, and ought not to be examined by men, according to these Ideas; or that God proposes nothing in his Word to be believed with a certain and firm assent, which a man of a sound Reason cannot clearly and distinctly perceive, according to these Ideas. And now let our Author judge, whose Character this is, and on which side these *Belgic Synods* and *Chairs* have given Judgment.

S E C T I V.

The Arguments of the Nominals, against a Real Trinity of proper subsisting Persons, Examined: And the Three First Arguments, Answered.

SEcondly, Let us now briefly examine his Reasons, which he thinks *so demonstrative*, that the (*so much talk'd of*) *Mathematical certainty is not superior to them*: But I have heard some men brag much of Demonstration, who have had nothing to say, that would amount to a good Probability.

Now to make my Answer plain and easy, I observe first, That all his Arguments to prove the *Realists* to be guilty of *Tritheism*, and to assert *Three Gods*, are levelled against a Trinity of *distinct, real, subsisting, intelligent Persons*, as he himself owns; for those invidious terms, of *Three Substances, Three Minds and Spirits, and Wills, and Understandings*, signify no more than Three, each of which in his own proper Person, is Substance, Mind, Spirit, Will, Understanding: So that all these Arguments are against the Catholick Faith of a Real Trinity; that is, to prove the Doctrine of the Trinity to be *Tritheism*; for that which is not a Real Trinity, is no Trinity: And therefore these Arguments do no more concern Dr. *Sherlock*, and some few others, whom this Author would fain single out from the Body of Catholick Believers, by the Name of *Realists*, than all other Christians, who heartily Believe

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in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and own *Christ Jesus* to be the Eternal Son of God, and true and perfect God himself.

Secondly, I observe, That all these Arguments are no farther considerable, than as they directly oppose the Catholick Faith in its full Latitude ; that is, a Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity. The Scripture assures us, That there is but one God, but teaches withall, That the Father is God, the Son God ; and the Holy Ghost God ; We believe God concerning himself, and his own Nature and Unity, because he best knows himself, and therefore we believe, that there is but one God, but not that there is but One Person, who is God, for there are Three in the Unity of the same Godhead, and each of them true and perfect God ; so that it is not enough for these Demonstrators to prove, That there is and can be but One Eternal Divinity, or one God ; for we readily own it, and as heartily Believe it as they do ; but we say withall, that this one Divinity subsists distinctly and indivisibly, whole and perfect in Three, and that therefore there is a Trinity in Unity : Nor is it sufficient to prove, That in the Trinity of the *Realists*, there are Three, each of which is by himself true and perfect God, and therefore that there are *Three Gods* ; for we own such Three, but say, that these Three are not Three Gods, but subsist inseparably in one Undivided Divinity, and therefore that there is a *Unity in Trinity*. But if they would confute either the Trinity or the Unity, they must prove, That there are not, and cannot be, Three real subsisting Persons in One infinite undivided Essence, and then they will effectually Confute the Scripture, and a Trinity with it ; or they must prove, That though Three such Persons should subsist distinctly in one undivided Essence, yet they

they are not one and the same Divinity, or one God; and then they will Confute not only Scripture, but common Sense; That Three, which are One, are not One, or that One Divinity is not One God: Having premised this, let us now consider his Arguments.

I. In the first place, he says, *Three infinite Intelle- P. 35.
ctual Substances, or Three Eternal Omnipotent Minds or Spirits,* (or which we have heard is the same thing, Three infinite intelligent Persons) *can never be but One God; because 'tis evident, nay confessed, That One such Spirit, Mind, or Substance, is One (absolute and most perfect) God.* — If the Definition is multiplied, the thing defined is also therewith multiplied, — Seeing then 'tis the definition of One God, that he is One infinite (intellectual, spiritual) Substance, One Eternal, Omnipotent, and Omniscient Spirit or Mind; Therefore if we multiply our definition, by saying, *Three Infinite (intellectual, spiritual) Substances, &c.* we thereby multiply the thing we pretended to Define, namely, GOD; which is to say, we affirm more Gods, as many Gods as such Substances and Spirits.

Here our Demonstrator stumbles at the very Threshold. I grant, That an infinite intellectual spiritual Substance, an Eternal, Omniscient, Omnipotent Mind or Spirit, is the Definition of One, who is God, or of a Divine Person; but I absolutely deny, That this is the Definition of One God; that he is One Eternal, Omniscient, &c. Personal Mind or Spirit, as he fallaciously and absurdly represents it; and in so doing, instead of proving what he undertakes, he very modestly and humbly begs the Question. He is to prove, That Three infinite Substances, Minds, or Spirits, are Three Gods: His Argument is, Because One infinite Substance, Mind, or Spirit, is the Definition of One God; and if you multiply the Definition, you multiply the thing defined,

and therefore Three infinite Substances and Minds must be Three Gods; but how does he prove, that *One* infinite Substance and Mind (personally understood as we understand it) is the Definition of *One God*? for this is the thing in dispute, which certainly no *Trinitarian* will grant him, and therefore ought to be proved. Those who Assert, as all *Trinitarians* do, That Three infinite intelligent Persons, each of which is infinite Substance, Mind or Spirit, are but One God, will not be so good-natur'd as to grant, That One infinite Substance and Mind (or One Divine Person) is the definition of the *One God*; this would not be to Dispute, but to beg the Cause on one side, and to give it away on the other.

But this may be thought perverseness, to put men upon proving what is self-evident: For, Is not an infinite intelligent Person, Substance, Mind, Spirit, true and perfect God? Yes, most certainly; but it is not the Definition of the *One God*, but only of a Divine Person; and the Christian Faith teaches us, That Three such Divine Persons are but One God. The Catholick Fathers have given us another Notion of *One God*, That ἑὶς Θεὸς is μία Θεότης, *One God is One Divinity*; that is, an Eternal, Immutable, Indivisible, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Life, Being, Essence, Nature: and the Essential, Undivided, Unity, Sameness, Identity, of the Godhead in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is the Unity of God: For I take it to be more like a Demonstration, than any I expect to meet with in this Author, That where there is but One Essential undivided Divinity, there is but One God.

Now this I think may vindicate those obnoxious Expressions as some think them, of Three infinite Substances, Minds and Spirits, from the Charge of *Tritheism*; for since infinite Substance, Mind, and Spirit, is not the definition of *One God*, but only of a
Divine

Divine Person, to say, Three infinite Substances, Minds, and Spirits, does not multiply Gods, but only Divine Persons.

2. His second Argument is *against Three Wills, Three Understandings, Three Energies, or Principles, or Powers of Action* in One God: This he represents as monstrously absurd; when as in truth, if it be absurd, the only absurdity is, That there should be Three Divine Persons, that is, Three, who have a Personal Will, Understanding, Power, of their own, in the Unity of the same Godhead: Now the absurdity of this I cannot see, nor has he made the least offer to prove it. But the secret of all these monstrous Absurdities, is this. He represents *One God*, to signify only *One single Person*, who is God, and then indeed, Three Wills, Three Understandings, Three Lives, of one single Person, is as Absurd and Monstrous as one would wish; but before he had charged the Doctrine of a Real Trinity with such Absurdities, he should first have proved, That *One God* signifies but *One single Person*, and have exposed the monstrous Absurdities of *Three Persons* and *One God*, and then we would have given him leave to have represented *Three Personal Wills, Understandings, and Lives*, as absurd as he pleases; but if it be not absurd to own *Three Persons*, I'm sure it is very absurd to deny, that there are *Three*, who *Live, and Will, and Understand*, that is, in his Language, *Three Wills, Understandings, and Lives*, in *One God*.

3. His Third Argument comes nearer the Business; for he undertakes to prove, That the Second and Third Persons in the Trinity, the Son and the Holy Ghost, are not *Substance and Spirit*, but only *Properties, or immanent Acts, or relative Subsistences in the Notion of the Nominals*: And his Argument is made up partly of Authority, and partly of his own Reasoning upon it.

His.

His Authority is the Council of Lyons in the year 1274. which Condemns those, who presume to deny, That the Holy Spirit does eternally proceed from the Father and the Son.—— He adds, 'Tis evident at first sight to any Learned man, who is conversant in these Questions, and in the Writers, who (in several Ages) have managed 'em, what the Fathers of this Council meant, and what they aimed at in this Decree or Canon: For because they believed that the Divine Persons are not Minds and Spirits, but relative Substances, or what is the same, immanent Acts: Therefore they could not but believe and define, That the Second Person is eternally generated, and therefore called the Son; That the Third is an Eternal Spiration, and therefore called Spirit. I can't think what to call this, and therefore shall say nothing of it, but only beg my Reader's Pardon for giving it an Answer.

In the first place this Council says nothing of the *Eternal Generation* of the Son, and therefore this could not be what they aimed at, as he pretends. In the next place, The *Eternal Procession* of the Holy Ghost was not the thing in question, but his *Eternal Procession* from Father and Son, which the *Latin Church* professed, and therefore added the *Filioque* to their Creed; but the *Greek Church* had disputed and condemned it, and that was one great design of this Council to bring the *Greeks* to consent to this addition: so that it was not the *Aternaliter*, but the *Filioque* which the Council had principal regard to in this Decree; not the *Eternal Procession*, but the *Procession* from the Father and the Son; so little did they think of what our Author makes their chief design. But there is another Clause in this Decree which he has concealed, which proves, that they thought quite otherwise; for
they

they do not only condemn those, who deny that the Holy Spirit proceeds Eternally from Father and Son; but those also, who teach that he proceeds from Father and Son, as from two Principles, and by two Spirations, and not as from one Principle, by one Spiration. Now had they believed the Son to be a meer immanent Act, such an unsubsisting Reason and Wisdom as is in Man, had not this been a very wise Dispute, Whether this immanent Act were a Principle of Spiration, either together with the Father, or distinct from him? But nothing is to be wondered at in an Author, who will venture to say, That Eternal Generation, and Eternal Procession, is not reconcileable with the real personal subsistence of the Son and Holy Spirit, but proves them to be meer immanent Acts; and that those, who own such an Eternal Generation and Procession, must consequently believe so: for this is the only Argument he has to prove the Fathers of this Council to have believ'd the Son and Spirit to be meer immanent Acts, because they assert the Eternal Generation and Procession; whereas on the contrary it is evident, that all the Catholick Fathers, who asserted the Eternal Generation and Procession, did as strenuously assert against the *Noetians* and *Sabellians*, the true and proper Personality of the Son and Spirit.

But let us hear how he proves, That if the Son and Spirit, *The Second and Third Persons, be distinct Substances and Spirits from the First*, (that is, if the Son in his own Person, as distinct from the Person of the Father, be Substance and Spirit, and so of the Holy Ghost) *it were heinous Nonsense to say, they were Eternally generated, or Eternally proceed.* His Argument is this :

Spiritus sanctus æternaliter ex Patre & Filio, non tanquam ex duobus principiis, sed tanquam ex uno principio, non duabus spirationibus, sed unica spiratione procedit.

Damnatus & reprobamus omnes qui negare præsumpserint, Spiritum Sanctum æternaliter ex Patre & Filio procedere, sive etiam temerario ausu asserere, quod Spiritus Sanctus ex Patre & Filio, tanquam ex duobus principiis, & non tanquam ex uno, procedat. Conc. Lugdun.

this: *If the Persons are Substances and Spirits, it must be said, that the Second was compleatly and finally generated from all Eternity; the like also of the Third Person, else they should be incompleat Substances, unfinished Spirits.—— If they are Spirits or Substances, it can never be said that one is Eternally generated, the other does Eternally proceed: but the former was generated from all Eternity, and the other actually and compleatly proceeded from all Eternity.*

Now supposing the Reason of this to be unanswerable; All that it amounts to is no more but this, That the Catholick Fathers, who attested the true and proper Personality of the Son, and Holy Spirit, were very absurd, and guilty of *Heinous Nonsense*, in saying, That the Son is Eternally generated, and the Spirit Eternally proceeds. These are Nice Speculations, which the *Arian* Controversy engaged them in; but the *Nicene* Fathers contented themselves to affirm no more concerning the Eternal Generation, than that the *Son was begotten of his Father before all Worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God.* And this Notion of an Eternal Generation our Author has no Objection against, and we do not think our selves bound to answer for all the Subtilties either of the Fathers or Schools; nor to determine every Curious Question, which Perverse and Heretical Wits can start concerning the Divine Generation and Procession, which is above the Comprehension of Angelical Minds, and which we know no more of, but that the Son is begotten, and the Spirit proceeds.

And

And yet this Reasoning is very absurd, when applied to an Eternal and immutable Nature. Things, which have a beginning, which are made, which are successively and gradually perfected by Art, are incompleat and unfinish'd, while they are a-making, and if they are always a-making, or always incompleat; but a Generation or Procession, without an Beginning, and without Succession, must always be perfect, and always the same, if it be at all; there is no new Production, no making any thing, no transient Action; in which sense the Catholick Fathers denied the Divine Generation to be *corporeus*, or Action, but only an Essential *gen*, habitude, relation between Father and Son, who both perfectly and eternally subsist, and co-exist with each other, but so, that the Son is of the Father, and the Holy Spirit of Father and Son: Thus they were without any Beginning, and thus they always are, and this is all they meant by an Eternal Generation and Procession, and this the Immutability of the Divine Nature forc'd them to own; for though external Acts and Relations make no Change in the Divine Nature, yet what is *ad intra* does; and therefore could we conceive any distinguishable moments in Eternal Duration, when God was no Father, when he begot a Son, and when he ceased to beget, this would make an internal Change in the Divine Nature it self, which is inconsistent with perfect Immutability. But the Son always was and is of the Father, and this is his Eternal Generation, and the Holy Spirit always was and is of Father and Son, and this is his Eternal Procession, and thus the Divine Essence always was and is the same, a Trinity in Unity, and this is the perfect Immutability of God.

And yet his Philosophy is very absurd, when he argues from an Eternal Generation and Procession, that therefore the Son and Holy Spirit must be incompleat and unfinish'd; for this will not be granted him even in created Nature,

much less in the Divinity. They are no mean Philosophers, who tell us, that the World may very properly be said to be perpetually created; that what we call Preservation, or upholding all things in being, is the very same Act and Power which at first gave Being to them; and such a permanent Act is Creation still, though no new Production of any thing: But these Men would scorn any one who should hence conclude, that there is no compleat or finish'd Substance, no really subsisting substantial World: Much more absurd is it, to conclude this of an Eternal Generation, which produces nothing new, nothing that ever began to be, and is the same that ever it was, without any Succession.

And he defends the Nominalists just as wisely and philosophically, as he opposes the Realists, as if his only design were to expose both.

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He says this Eternal Generation proves the Son and Holy Spirit, to be only *immanent Acts* in God, *reflex Wisdom*, or the *Wisdom that resulteth from Original Minds Eternal Contemplation and Knowledge of the Divine Nature and Perfections*, and the *everlasting Spirations of Love that must proceed from the Original and reflex Wisdom of the Deity*. And here we have just such a Trinity in the Godhead, as there is in every particular Man, his Mind, and the immanent Acts of Wisdom or Reason, and Love, which all Learned Men know to be one kind of *Sabellianism*.

That the Son is the Wisdom and Power of God, and that the peculiar Character of the Holy Spirit is Love, is the language both of Scripture and Fathers; but not as *immanent Acts*, but the living subsisting Wisdom of the Father, and living subsisting Love, eternal and infinite Persons, co-eternal and co-equal with the Father: But it is a new Language, unknown to Scriptures and Fathers, to call an *immanent Act of Wisdom* a Son, and the Minds producing such an Act, its generating or begetting a Son, and

and to call such an immanent Act in God, the Son of God, and God; by which Rule, every Thought or Act of Reason in any Man, is Man, and the Son of that Man whose Thought and Act it is.

And it as new Philosophy to talk of *immanent Acts* in God; for there can be no immanent Acts, but where there are Powers and Faculties, which is the Imperfection of the Creature-State, not incident to the perfect Simplicity of the Divine Nature.

But besides this, what does he mean by the *Eternal Generation* and *Spiration of an immanent Act*; an immanent Act (according to all the Accounts I ever met with of it, and as every Man may feel in himself) is not an *abiding*, as he calls it, but a *transient Act*: it has no permanent stable Nature, no Subsistence of its own, but vanishes and dies as soon as *generated*, to speak in his language; which is a necessary Reason to remove all such immanent Acts from God, in whom there is nothing vanishing, nothing successive: but if Men will attribute *immanent Acts* to God, (*reflex Wisdom*, as opposed to a living, subsisting, personal Wisdom) they must speak of them according to the known Nature of such Acts, and then an *Eternal Generation* of such an immanent Act, which vanishes, as soon as generated, can signify no more, than an *eternal successive Repetition* (which is a Contradiction) of the Acts of *reflex Wisdom*, that as one vanishes, another succeeds; that though God has always this reflex Wisdom, yet he has not always the same Act of reflex Wisdom, but produces it a new every moment, which he calls an *Eternal Generation*: just as it is with Men who may have the same Thought for kind some time together, but yet every moment it is new produced: To talk of such an *Eternal Son* as this, and such an *Eternal Generation*, is *Heretic* in Philosophy, and in common sense, as well as in Christianity, and it would be loss of time to expose it.

I must no more omit than he, another surprizing Argument whereby he proves, that the Catholick Church did believe, that the second Person is the reflex Wisdom of God, and the Third Divine Love, because for this reason, as he tells us, this Question has been very warmly debated whether the Son is that Wisdom, wherewith the Father is Wise. Those Fathers, who affirm this Question, usually alledge these two Arguments; that the Eternity of the Son cannot be otherwise proved, but by this, That he is the Eternal Wisdom of the Father; and that otherwise we must suppose Two Wisdoms in God, which is so absurd to a late learned Ecclesiastical Historian, that he concludes his Dissertation concerning this Question, with these Words: The Father neither is, nor can be actually Wise, but by the Word or Son. J. Cabassutius Notis. Eccl. p. 120. correct. 119. let the Reader now judge of all the rest by this.

That this Question was disputed I own: But he has assign'd a very false and a very absurd Occasion for it; for had this been the received Faith of the Catholick Church, that the Son is only the immanent Act of reflex Wisdom in God, what Occasion had there been for this Dispute, whether the Son is that Wisdom by which the Father is Wise? that is, the personal Wisdom of the Father; for who ever disputed, whether immanent Acts were Personal, or no? And therefore this very Dispute proves, that they did not believe the Son to be a meer immanent Act.

But though they did dispute among themselves, in what Sence Christ is called the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God; and whether Christ be that Wisdom, wherewith the Father is Wise, and in what Sence the Father may be said to beget his own Wisdom; and how the Son can be said to be *sapientia de sapientia*, Wisdom of Wisdom, if the Father in his proper Person be not Wisdom, but only the Begetter of Wisdom, with many other Questions,

sions, as we see in *St. Austin, lib. VI. de Trin.* Yet they never divided upon this Point, but did universally agree, that the Father in his own proper Person is Original Mind, and Wisdom; and that the Son in his own proper Person is begotten Wisdom, even the Essential Wisdom of God, not that personal Wisdom wherewith the Father is Wise, but Wisdom truly and properly begotten of Original Wisdom; Living, Subsisting Wisdom, distinct in Person from the Father, who is Original Wisdom, but perfectly the same one undivided Essence, and therefore not Essentially Two, but One and the same Wisdom, which is the Wisdom of the Father: So that though there was some Dispute about the true Signification of such Expressions, yet here was no Division among the Catholicks, who all agreed on that Side of the Question, which directly contradicts this Author's Catholick Faith of *immanent Acts*.

The true Occasion of this Dispute, as *St. Austin* tells us in the same Place, was this; that some of the Fathers, I think he might have said all the *Nicene Fathers*, in their Disputes with the *Arians* and *Eunomians* about the Eternal Generation of the Son, or Word, used this Argument, that God was never *αὐτός* without his Word, or Wisdom: not that they had no other Argument to prove the Eternity of the Son, as this Author represents it, but that they thought this a very good one: Now the Force of this Argument seemed to be this, that God is always Wise; and therefore that Person, who is the Word and Wisdom of God, must have always been with him, as Eternal as God is: And to make this a good Argument, the necessary Consequence seemed to be, That the Person of the Son, who is the begotten Word, and Wisdom of the Father, is the personal Wisdom of the Father, that Wisdom wherewith the Father is Wise: And the Difficulty of this was, how this begotten Wisdom, which

which is a distinct Person from the Person of the Father, should be that Wisdom whereby the Person of the Father is Wise: how they justified this Argument, and yet avoided such Absurdities, is too long now to account for; those who please may consult St. *Austin* for it; but I hope every one sees that both the Reason of this Question, the Nature of those Difficulties, it was incumbered with, and their Determination of the Point, are all direct Contradictions to what this Author alledged it for.

And now let us hear what our Author's learned *Cassianus* says, but what the World will say of him, when they hear what *Cassianus* says, let others guess.

This learned *Hilsonian* takes Notice of this Dispute, and gives the same Account of it which I have now done; and vindicates that Argument of the Catholick Fathers for the Eternity of the Son, because he is the Wisdom of the Father, that were he not Eternal, the Father could not be always Wise, from the Exceptions of St. *Austin*. This he does by a Distinction borrowed from *Aquinas*; that those, who taught the Son to be the Wisdom of the Father, are to be understood, not in a formal, but causal and illative Sense. For though the Son, as a Son, is not that Wisdom, wherewith the Father is Wise (let our Author first observe that) yet he is necessarily united with it, and arises from it: So that the Son is not the personal Wisdom of the Father, but is begotten of his Father's Wisdom, and inseparably united to it: and therefore is the Wisdom of God, Wisdom of the Father's Wisdom and inseparable from it; which are Two, One of One, and indivisibly and inseparably One.

* Veruntamen non est caduca categororum, quos nominavi-mus, Patrum adversus Arium instantia, si debitam adhibeas distinctionem, qualem insinuat præclare S. Thomas 1. p.

q. 37. art. 2. ut non in formali, sed in causali & illativo, ut ita dicam, sensu sancti Patres intelligantur, quamvis enim filius, quæ illius non sit illa sapientia, quæ pater est sapiens, necessario tamen cum illa conjungitur, ab eaque oritur.

But let us hear his Reason for this * : For the Wisdom which is in the Father, is not a Habit, or Faculty, or Power, as it is in created Beings, but a pure and simple Act. What is now become of his immanent Act, by which he tells us Original Mind must be Wise : for if he believes his learned Historian, Original Mind is a pure simple Act it self, and therefore not Wise by Immanent Acts of reflex Wisdom, which suppose Habits and Faculties and Powers, and have no Place in a pure simple Act ; that if the Son be only an Immanent Act of reflex Wisdom, he will never find his second Person in a pure and simple Act..

* Sapiencia quippe quæ in Patre est, non est habitus, aut facultas, aut potentia, qualis est in rebus creatis, sed est purus & simplex Actus.

The Historian proceeds †, Every Act of Wisdom and Understanding necessarily includes its Terminus or Effect, and that is what we call Word, or in Greek *Abg*, which St. Cyril very well understood, where he tells us that Mind is never without its Word; and St. Thomas saies, that the commonly things receive their Denomination from their Forms, as White from Whiteness, Man from Humanity, yet sometimes they are denominated from their Effects; as a Tree is called Florid, from the Flowers it produces, though that be not the Form of it; and thus the Fathers rightly concluded against Arius, that the Father neither was nor could be actually Wise without his Word, and only begotten Son : Our Author renders it, but by the Word or Son, directly Contradictory both to the Argument and Words of Cabassutius : for by signifies the formal Cause, and is so intended by him, that the Father is Wise by the Son, by that immanent Act of reflex Wisdom which he calls the Son (tho' one would wonder, how Original

† Porro actus omnis sapiendi, intelligendi; (verbum) necessario complectitur omnis intellectus terminum inevitabilem, sine quo sapiendi aut intelligendi actus ne quidem animo concipi potest.

Terminus autem est ipsum verbum Græcè denominatum *Abg*, ut advertit Cyrillus l. 4. in Joan. c. 48.

Abg id est *verbum* nunc, nungquam enim mens erit sine verbo, quod & in l. 5. Thesauri uberius explicat. Et S. Thomas, loco paulò antè allegato, res ait communiter denominari non solum à suis formis, sicut album ab albedine, homo ab humanitate: Sed etiam à termino, ut cum arbor dicitur florida à floribus quos produxit, quamquam non sint arboris forma, sed effectus & terminus, atq; ita optime contra Arium, Patrem non fuisse actu sapientem, nec esse potuisse sine verbo ac unigenito Filio, concludunt sancti Patres.

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Mind and Wisdom, should be Wise by reflex Wisdom, which is but a secondary Wisdom, which supposes a first; and therefore, as one would guess, could not make the first wise) but *Cabassutius* only says, that the Father is not actually wise *without* the Son, that is, as he explains it, without begetting that Eternal Word and Wisdom, which is the Person of the Son. I shall make no Remarks on this, let the World judge of the skill, or the honesty of this Author.

What he adds about *Emanations*, is just to the same Tune: The Eternal Generation of the Substance of the Father, was by the *Nicene* Council represented by *Light of Light*, and the Co-eternity of the Son with the Father by the Co-existence of *Emanatory Causes* and their Effects, as of the Sun and its Rays, which are as old as the Sun. The Author, like other *Socinians*, thinking of nothing but Body, and bodily and corporeal *Emanations*, falls presently a demonstrating; *Let A. B. C. be three infinite Substances, if B. and C. (infinite Substances) emanate from A. an infinite Substance also: it is self-evident, that the two infinite Substances must exhaust, and thereby in the end annihilate one infinite Substance.*

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This is a notable Demonstration as to corporeal Substances; for if the whole flow out of it self, it is certain, it must cease to be what it was, and become another Whole, if it be not a Contradiction, that the same Whole should flow out of it self, and become another Whole, which in Bodies could make no other Change in a Whole, but a Change of Place, for let a Whole emanate, (if that be not Nonsense, for a corporeal Whole to emanate) and go where it will, it is it self, and the same Whole still.

And I think it is no better Sense, to talk of *exhausting an infinite Substance*; for nothing can be exhausted, but what is finite, unless what is infinite can have an end: and an exhausting Emanation of an infinite Substance

stance, is no better Sense than the rest; for it necessarily supposes an infinite Substance with divisible Parts, which may be separated from it self and from each other, which I take to be a Contradiction to the very Notion of Infinity. It is certain, that such Emanations, as exhaust their Subject, can be only bodily Emanations, for Bodies only have divisible and separable Parts, that I dese the most absurd, self-contradicting *Trinitarian* in the World, to put so many Absurdities and Contradictions into one Sentence, as he has done in this: *One infinite Substance (whether corporeal or incorporeal) can never eternally supply two infinite Substances: the two infinite Substances by continual Emanations must needs dry up the One, that was their Fountain.* To talk of an infinite corporeal Substance (which he here supposes) is absurd and unphilosophical, for nothing can be infinite which has Parts; for what is infinite by Nature can never be finite; and yet if such a supposed infinite Body were divided in the middle, (as all Bodies may be divided) this infinite corporeal Substance would prove two finite Substances, for each of them would have one End, where their Substance was divided: to talk of such Emanations from incorporeal Substances (which have no divisible Parts) as *can dry up an infinite Fountain,* which must be by a Partition and Division of Substances, is another Contradiction; and to dry up an infinite Fountain, as I observed before, is another; and to supply infinite Substances by such Emanations, which cannot be infinite, if they want any supply, is a fourth very good one.

But allowing this Author to rejoice in such refined Speculations, I would desire to know, who those are who attribute the Eternal Generation of the Son, and Procession of the Holy Spirit, to such eternal, corporeal Effluxes and Emanations, as will endanger the exhausting and drying up the infinite Fountain of the Deity? If there be any such

Men they are arrant Hereticks, I assure him, for the Catholick Fathers abhorred the thoughts of all such Emanations.

They did not indeed scruple the use of such Words, as Emanation, Probole, Exition, and the like, whereby they signified that the Son was truly and in a proper sense of his Father's Substance, and a real distinct Person from the Person of the Father, but they expressly rejected all corporeal Effluxes, all Division and Separation of the Father's Substance; and taught that the Son is begotten whole of whole, perfect God of perfect God, by a real Communication, but not a Transfusion of Substance, not *ad extra*, without, as Creature-Generations are, but within his Father; as the Word is inseparable from the Mind, whose Word it is. So that our Author disputes here without any other Adversary, but his own gross Imaginations, and he may triumph securely, and demonstrate these corporeal, exhausting, dying Emanations, out of Countenance; and the Realists no farther concerned, than to look on, and see the Event of the Combate, or to wish him better employed. If he would have effectually baffled these Realists, he should have proved, that God could not communicate his own Nature and Substance to the Son, Whole of Whole, without such an Emanation of his Substance, as divides it from it self, and separates one part of it from another, as it is in bodily Exhalations: This would effectually have confuted a substantial Generation; for all Men grant, that the Divine Substance can't be divided, and this was the Objection of the *Arians* against the *Æternals*, or the Son's being begotten of the Substance of the Father, but the Catholick Fathers asserted a real substantial Generation, without a Division of Substance, and taught them to distinguish between the Generation of Body and Spirit.

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And whoever considers, how a finite created Mind can communicate its Thoughts to another, which when perfectly communicated, are perfectly the same, whole and entire in both, and but one and the same Thought, though in two Minds; may conceive, that an infinite Mind, which is a pure and simple Act, infinitely more simple and indivisible than Thought it self, may be able to communicate its self more perfectly, than a finite Mind can communicate its Thoughts, and if it can, it must communicate it self whole and entire, and as indivisibly as a Thought, and subsist distinctly, perfectly One and the same in Two.

SECT. V.

The Fourth and Fifth Arguments against a Real Trinity Answered.

IV. **T**O proceed, his next Argument against the Realists is this, *That all Explications, by which 'tis endeavour'd to shew, how three infinite (intellectual Substances) three Almighty Spirits and Minds, may be one God, are manifestly Deficient.* Page. 45.

Now, suppose this true, that no Man can give a perfect Account of the Unity of the Divine Nature in Three Distinct, Infinite, Divine Persons; must we therefore deny either the *Trinity* or *Unity* (both which, we say, are expressly taught in Scripture) because we cannot fully comprehend so Sublime and Venerable a Mystery? They pay greater Deference than this to the Evidence of Sense; they will believe their Senses, where their Reason and Philosophy is at a loss, nay, in such Matters, as if they did not see them,

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them, they think they could demonstrate absolutely contradictory and impossible: and did Men heartily believe the Scriptures, why should they not as absolutely submit their Reason to the Authority of God, as to the Evidence of Sense? But let them answer for this.

But the whole Strength of this Argument, which he manages with great Triumph and Scorn, dwindles into the old Socinian Sophism, that *one God* signifies but *one only Person*, who is God; and that whatever other Unity you ascribe to three Persons, each of which is by himself true and perfect God, still they are three Gods; for since *each of these Spirits* (or Persons, each of which is an infinite Mind or Spirit) *are said to be infinite, all-perfect, they must be said to be Gods, mutually Conscious, mutually inexistent, and the rest; but no more one God, than they are one Spirit*: and therefore the Realists may as well pretend that by these Devices of theirs, they have contrived *three infinite Spirits into one Person, or into one Spirit, as into one God*. And that a *disinterested Person* (I suppose he means such as himself) and Philosophers, and Jews and Pagans, he might have added Sabellians, and Socinians, and Mahumadians, will call these *three Gods*.

Now it is no wonder that this *disinterested Person* thinks all our Explications of the Unity of God insufficient, when we so vastly differ about the Notion of *one God*: That we are so far from proving *three Divine Persons* to be *one God* in his Sense, that we reject his Notion of *one God*, as Judaism and Heresie; and herein we have the Authority of the Catholick Church on our side. And here I would desire the Reader to observe, that this Argument is not merely against that Phrase of *three Minds and Spirits and Substances*; but against three Persons, each of which is in his own proper Person, *Mind and Spirit and Substance*; for three such Persons, by this Authors Argument, are three Gods, and can no more be contrived

(as

(as he prophanely speaks) into *one God*, than into *one Personal Spirit*.

But yet since he graciously owns, that one infinite Almighty Spirit, is one God, what if we should prove these three Infinite Persons, each of which is Mind and Spirit, to be one and the same Infinite Eternal Spirit : And yet this has always been the Faith of the Catholick Church, *St. Austin* is exprefs in it, *The Father is Spirit, and the Son Spirit, and the Holy Ghost Spirit, but not three Spirits, but one Spirit* ; that is, not *Personally*, but *Essentially* One, they are three Persons; but one Essence, essentially one Spirit : And if God be perfect, pure, simple Essence, the Unity of Essence, is the Unity of God. This was the Doctrine of all the Catholick Fathers, and this we must insist on till our Modern Demonstrators speak more home to this Point, that one Divine Essence, one Self-originated Divinity, though subsisting in three distinct Persons, is but one God. I can't discourse this at large now, that may be done, if there be Occasion for it, another time, but at present I shall only give a brief Account of the Doctrine of the Fathers, as to this Point.

They tell us, that there is but one self-originated Divinity, but one Father, and therefore but one God ; that this Eternal Unbegotten Father, begets an Eternal Son of his own Nature and Substance, and in like Manner, that is, in the same Nature and Substance the Holy Spirit Eternally proceeds from Father and Son : So that there being but one Nature, one Divinity, communicated whole and entire and perfectly the same, without Division of Substance, there is but one Divine Nature, but one Divinity distinctly in three : not one meerly as a Species is one (though they often allude also to a Specific Unity) but one, as one *Individual*, though not one *Singular*, Nature is one : as one which subsists wholly, indivisibly, and perfectly in three, is one ; which

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is one, and one, and one, by a perfect Sameness, and Identity of Nature, and Substance, but not three.

That these three are inseparable from each other, never did subsist a part, never can; but are in each other, which they call the *ἁπλοῦς* and *Circumincession*, which makes the Divinity one simple, indivisible Monad: And here we may allow a Place, (and he never intended any other Place for it) to what Dr. Sherlock calls, *mutual Consciousness*, which is the proper and natural *In-being* of three, each of which is Mind and Spirit: which is not barely a knowing each other by an external Communication of Thoughts and Counsels, which is far from being an essential natural Unity; but such an inward vital Sensation, as each Person has of himself; which after all the Noise and Clamour about it, seems to be a very sensible Representation of the natural *In-being* and *Circumincession* of the Divine Persons; and as natural a Demonstration of the Unity of the Divine Essence, as *self-consciousness* must be acknowledged to be of the Unity of a Person.

It is certain, without this they cannot be *one Energy and Power* (wherein the Fathers also place the Unity of the God-Head) one Agent, one Creator and Governour. But where there is such an inseparable Union, such a mutual conscious Sensation, there can be but *μία κίνησις ἀγαθῆ βολήματι* &c., as Greg. Nyssen speaks, One Motion of the Divine Will, though distinctly and without Confusion in three: And this makes them one Agent, one Essential Will, one Essential Wisdom, one Essential Power; so that here is in the properest Sense, but one Omniscience, one Omnipotence, one Will, &c. and therefore but one God, though Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are each of them in their own Persons, Omnipotent, Omniscient, and whatever belongs to the Idea of God.

All this, indeed, does not make these three Divine Persons one Person, and therefore not one God, in the *Socinian* Sense of *one God*, which is the only Deficiency this Author charges this Account of the Divine Unity with; and is wisely done of him, because he knows we reject this Notion of the Divine Unity, and therefore here he is safe; we assert that the Unity of God, is not the Unity of a Person, but the Unity of Nature and Essence; and to confute this, he gravely proves, that three Persons are not, and cannot be one Person: But if he would have opposed us, he should either have shewn, *First*, That the Account the Catholick Fathers give (for for we pretend to give no other) of the Unity of God, does not prove, the perfect Unity of the Divine Essence in three Persons: or *Secondly*, that one undivided Divinity is not one God: or *Thirdly*, that the same Eternal Essence cannot subsist whole and perfect, distinctly and indivisibly in Three; that is, that God cannot communicate his own Nature and Substance, without Division and Separation, to his Son, and Spirit; or that God cannot have an Eternal Son, and an Eternal Spirit: if he can do either of these, we will very tamely and humbly follow his Chariot; in the mean time (for I believe this will take up some time) I will shew him the Difference between three Divine Persons, each of which is true and perfect God, and three Gods.

1. *First*, then *one God* in the *Socinian* Notion, is one infinite Mind and Spirit, one Eternal Divinity, in one only Person: So one Person, and one Divinity, that no other Person communicates with it in the same Divinity, in the same one eternal Essence and Substance: Now according to this Notion of *one God*, *three Gods* are three such eternal Minds, Substances, Divinities, each of which in his own Person, has a whole, perfect, undivided Essence and

and Divinity, which is not common to any other Person : So that three Gods are three absolute Substances, Essences, Divinities, which have no Essential Relation to, or Communication with each other. There can be no other Notion of three Gods, if as this Author, and all the *Anti-Trinitarians* assert, One God is One absolute Divinity in One Person ; for then three Gods must be three absolute Divinities in three Persons : Now every one sees, what a vast difference there is, between three such Gods, and the Catholick Faith of a Trinity of Persons, in the Unity of the Divine Essence.

Why, you'll say, is not every Person in the Trinity, *by himself*, in his own Person, true and perfect God ? Yes, most certainly ; but he is not one absolute, separate Divinity ; he has not a Divinity so peculiarly his own, that no other Person communicates in it ; there is but One undivided Divinity in all Three, and therefore there is a Trinity in Unity.

But is not each Person in the Trinity infinite Mind, Spirit, Substance ? Nay, do not some *Realists* venture to call them *three Minds, Spirits, Substances* ? and what are such Three, but three Gods, if One infinite Mind and Spirit, be one God ?

I answer : An infinite Mind and Spirit, is certainly true and perfect God ; but one Personal infinite Mind and Spirit is not the *One God*, so as to exclude all other Persons, unless he have one absolute, separate Divinity also, so proper and peculiar to himself, that no other Person does or can communicate in it ; for if more Persons than One can perfectly communicate in the same One Divinity, there must be more Divine Persons than One, and each of them perfect God, but neither of them the One God, in Exclusion of the other Persons, but all of them the One God as the One Divinity.

This

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This, I think, the *Socinians* will grant, That One Divinity is but One God, and that One God is One absolute Divinity; and the Reason why they assert the One God to be but One Person, is because they think it impossible, that the same undivided Divinity should subsist distinctly and perfectly in Three; but then before they had charged the Faith of the Trinity with *Tritheism*, they should have remembred, that the Persons of the Trinity are not three such Persons, as *their One Person* is, whom they call the One God; and therefore though three such Persons, three such Minds and Substances, as their One Person, and One Spirit is, who is the whole Divinity confined to One single Person, would be Three Gods, this does not prove, that Three such Persons as the Catholick Church owns in the Ever-blessed Trinity, who are all of the same One Substance, and but One Divinity, must therefore be three Gods also.

2. Three such Persons as these, who are three Gods, our Author, and every one else, who understands any thing of these Matters, must acknowledge to be three *self-originated* Persons; for God, in the full and adequate Notion of *one God*, is a *self-originated Being*; and those who assert, that the *One God*, is but *One Person*, make him a *self-originated Person*: now it is evident, that in this Sense the three Persons in the Christian Trinity are not three Gods, for they are not *three self-originated Persons*: The Father alone is *un-begotten*, or *self-originated*, but the Son is begotten of his Father's Substance, and the Holy Ghost eternally proceeds from Father and Son; so that here is but one self-originated Person, with his Eternal Son, and Eternal Spirit. And let this Author try to make three Gods of three, two of which are not self-originated Persons. They might more plausibly dispute against the Divinity of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, from this Topick, that they

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are not *self-originated* Persons, than prove them to be a second and third God, by their perfect Communication in a *self-originated Nature*, which is the Person of the Father. For though a perfect Communication of the Divine Nature makes a true Divine Person, who is true and perfect God, yet no Person can be *the One God*, who is not *self-originated*; and a *self-originated Person*, who is a *Father*, cannot be the *One God*, so as to exclude his Son, who is of the same Nature and Substance with him; nor the Holy Spirit, who by an Eternal Procession from Father and Son, perfectly communicates in the same Eternal Nature.

3. Three such Persons, as in a strict and proper Notion are three Gods, must be three separate Persons, who have not only distinct, but separate Natures, and Substances, and have no internal Union, or Communication with each other; and therefore are in a proper Notion three Principles, three Agents, three Wills, three Lives, three Omnipotents, &c. who always act a part, and can never concur as one Agent, in any one Action; cannot make and govern the same World; have no Relation to each other, no Order, no Union, as it is impossible three absolute, independent Divinities should. But the Catholick Faith concerning the three Divine Persons in the Trinity, is directly contrary to this, that as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are but One Substance, One Divinity; so they are so perfectly in each other, that they have but one Essential Will, Omnipotence, Omniscience, are but one Agent, one Creatour and Governour of the World.

Let this Author, or any other Adversaries, talk what they please, of the Absurdity, Nonsense, Contradiction, of all this, which is not our present dispute, I stand to it, that they can never make *Tritheism* of it; for the three
Divine

Divine Persons in the Trinity, though each of them be by himself true and perfect God, yet as they are owned by the Catholick Church, and as we have now explain'd it, are not three such Persons, as they themselves must confess, three Persons must be, who are three Gods.

What I have now discoursed will help us to give a plain and short Answer to those Fallacies, whereby such *disinterested* Persons, as this Authour, charge the Catholick Faith of the Trinity with *Tritheism*; for they manifestly equivocate both in the Notion of *one God*, and of *one Person*.

By *One God*, they understand one who is true and perfect God, and every one, who is true and perfect God, is one, and now instead of all other Demonstrations, they only desire you to number the Persons of the Trinity upon your Fingers, and if you can but tell to three, you will infallibly find three Gods: The Father is true and perfect God; there, say they, is One God: the Son is true and perfect God; there are Two Gods: the Holy Ghost is true and perfect God; there are Three Gods: *quod erat demonstrandum*.

But do they think that all the Catholick Fathers knew not how to find Three in the Trinity, till they taught them to tell three upon their Fingers? and if they found three, but yet could not find three Gods in the Trinity, they might in Modesty have thought, that something more than *Arithmetick*, or telling their Fingers, was necessary to make good this Charge, and because they either are, or would seem to be ignorant of this, I will tell them what it is.

In that Dispute, whether there be only One God, or more Gods than One; By *One God*, in the first place, all Men understand One Divinity, one Infinite, Omnipotent, Essence and Nature; for all the Arguments relating to the Unity of God directly prove no more than the Unity of

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the Divine Essence : that God is but One Person, as well as One Divinity, (as most Men did, and as all Men might reasonably conclude before the Revelation of a Trinity of Divine Persons in the Essential Unity of the God-head) is not owing to any direct and positive Proof, but to a common Presumption : For since we have no Example in created Nature, of more than one proper Person in one individual inseparable Nature ; most Men hence concluded, naturally enough, that one Divinity was but one Divine Person also. But God, who understands his own Nature best, has revealed to us in Scripture, that there are Three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who equally and perfectly communicate in this One infinite and undivided Essence, and therefore that there are Three Divine Persons, and One God. And this has occasioned a Confusion of Terms, on which our *Socinian* Adversaries have grounded all their noisie Triumphs : for now *One God*, and *One Person*, signify very differently in the Mystery of the Trinity, from what they do in common Acceptation, and must of necessity do so.

One God, in natural Religion, before the Revelation of this Sacred Mystery, signified One Divinity, One infinite Nature and Essence, without any Notion of more than One Substance, and One Personality ; and then consequently One Person, who is this One God, must signify One, who has this whole Divinity, perfectly in himself, and exclusively to all other Persons. But in the Christian Mystery ; *One God*, signifies also One perfect undivided Divinity, but *communicable whole and perfect, and indivisibly to more than One*, and actually subsisting in three distinct Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; and therefore consequently, *Person* also in this Mystery, signifies One, who has the whole Divine Nature perfectly in himself, and therefore is true and perfect God, but has not the whole Divinity incommunicably in

in himself, exclusively to all other Persons, and therefore is not the *one God*, in the Sense of *one perfect incommunicable Divinity*, peculiar to himself, and communicated to no other Person, nor subsisting in any other. And now let any Man judge of the mean Sophistry of our Adversaries, who from their Notion of *One Person* and *One God*, which the Catholick Church with great Reason rejects, charge the Catholick Faith of a real, subsisting, *Trinity*, with *Tritheism*, for they do not dispute *ad idem*, but impose upon Men with an equivocal Use of Words. Three such Divine Persons indeed, as they own, that is, each of which has a whole perfect Divinity in himself, which no other Person communicates, or can communicate in, must be in a proper Notion, three Gods, or three perfect, self-originated, separate, Divinities; but this does not prove (and yet in the last Result this is all the Proof they offer at) that three Persons, who have but one common Divinity, though distinctly and perfectly subsisting in each of them, are therefore three Gods; for neither of these Persons is so God, as to exclude the others from the same Divinity, and therefore are not three Divinities, not three self-originated divine Essences, and therefore not three Gods, according to the natural Notion of *Tritheism*: God, and God, and God, who have the same One Divinity subsisting in them all, are not Three Gods, but One God, because One Divinity. Here it is they should attack us, and if they have any thing to say to this Point, we are ready to join Issue with them.

Fifthly, His last Argument, which he places great Confidence in, is very easily answered. It is this. *That all the Reasons used by Philosophers, or Divines, to prove that there is but one God, do as certainly and as clearly prove, that there can be but one infinite and all-perfect Spirit.*

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All this still is nothing but the same Equivocation and Fallacy, which I have already sufficiently answered: *One infinite and all-perfect Spirit* may either signifie *one Person*, who is *infinite Mind or Spirit* in his own Person, and here we are ready to joyn Issue with him, that all the Arguments, which prove, that there is but one God, do not prove that there is but one Divine Person, but One, who is this One God: or it may signifie one Divinity, which is *Essentially* one infinite all-perfect Spirit, but *personally* three; and in this Sense we agree with him; for we assert one undivided Essence *Essentially* one in three, that is, we believe there is but one God, who is One in Nature and Three in Persons. And this seems a pretty surprizing Undertaking, to prove that the Arguments for one God confute a Trinity of real subsisting Persons in the Unity of the same God-head: It is certain, before he can do this, he must make three Gods of these three Divine Persons; for if they be but one God, the Arguments for the Unity of God, can never confute a Trinity of Persons; and here I might reasonably leave this Argument, till he has answered, what I have already said in this Cause. But let us hear his Arguments against Polytheism, and see how he applies them.

First, *That created Nature has nothing needless or in vain, much less can we suppose, that the uncreated Divine Nature hath ought, that is, superfluous or redundant* — But now, is it not a Superfluity, say they, to suppose more Gods, when (because one is sufficient) more Gods are needless, and wholly in vain?

I do not remember, that I have met with this Argument in these Terms, in any of the ancient Apologists for Christianity: I think, it is a very bad Argument against the being of any thing, but much more so, when applied to the Divine Nature.

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That Nature does nothing in vain, has been allowed for a Maxim among all Philosophers, who have acknowledged a God, or that all things are made by a wise Cause, the necessary Consequence of which is, that nothing is made in vain, and this is the only Proof, and the only Reason of that Maxim: but, *that created Nature has nothing needless, or in vain*, is not a self-evident Proposition, but must be proved by an induction of Particulars, and is very hard to be prov'd in this way, because we understand so little of the Designs, and Contrivance and Wisdom of Nature: that many who begin at this end of the Question, reject a wise Cause and Maker of the World, because they think, they discover many Defects, or many superfluities in Nature, that is, many things which are needless or in vain: and this looks like an unfortunate Beginning thus to mistake his Maxim.

But to allow him this: What Philosopher ever pretended to prove by this Argument, that such things either were, or were not, as they apprehended to be either defective, needless or superfluous? Whether such things are, or are not, is pure Matter of Fact, and must be proved by such Ways, as the Nature of the Thing admits, Matters of Sense by Sense, Matters of Revelation by Revelation: and when Men know that such things are, and what they are, then they judge of them, whether they be vain and needless, defective or superfluous, or wisely made, as they begin at the right or wrong End of this Question. Those who are persuaded, that the World was made by a wise Cause, hence conclude, that all things are wisely made, though there are many things which they do not understand the Reason and Philosophy of: Others, presuming upon their own Skill in Nature, pick many Quarrels with it, and find few things, which thoroughly please them, and thence conclude that the World was not made by a wise Cause, because they do not see the Wisdom of it.

But

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But whatever Truth or Force, there be in this Argument, it can relate only to created Nature, to such things as are made, and are made to serve some particular End: for then only a thing is vain and needless, when it is made so in whole, or in Part, as to serve no wise End: but surely we must not dispute at this Rate concerning an eternal, uncreated, self-originated Nature, which was not made by any Cause, and therefore has no end but it self: and yet this is his Argument, to prove two or three Gods *superfluous, needless, in vain, because one God is sufficient*: sufficient for what? why, to make and govern the World; Well! Is God then only for the Sake of Creatures? Can a Being, who was never made, who has no Cause, no Beginning, have any End but it self? Was one God a superfluous, needless Being, before he made the World? or was the World from Eternity as well as God? And does not an *Atheist*, who can make and govern a World without a God, conclude from this very Argument, that there is none, because he is a superfluous and needless Being? which shews, what a dangerous Argument this is, when proposed in such loose general Terms. God is indeed the Maker and Governour of the World, and we can prove, that the World could not be made and governed but by God, and that one God can make and govern the World, and there needs no more for this Purpose, and the Unity and Harmony of the World, that is made, proves that there is but one Maker and Governour of it, and therefore but one God: Such Arguments as these, together with the Notion of an absolute perfect Being, which can be but one, were urged by the antient *Apologists*, against the *Pagan Polytheism*; but to make God a *superfluous* or *needless* Being, any farther than he has a Respect and Relation to Creatures, which this Argument against the plurality of Gods supposes, is very irreverent to God, and liable to very

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ill Consequences. It was never used in this Sense by any of the antient Fathers, and the first time *Petavius* observes it is in *Abaelardus* and *Edmundus Cantuariensis*: and that more cautiously expressed, and better qualified.

Secondly, His Second Argument is much of the same Nature: *The multiplicity of Beings, of any sort, arises only from the weakness, imperfection, and insufficiency (in some regard or other) of those Beings, which is such a weak Reason for the multiplicity of Beings, as I never in my Life before met with.* The Reason why any imperfect Beings are, is because they are made, for what is imperfect can't be without a Cause: and what ever is made must be imperfect, because it must have some finite and limited Nature; for an infinite Nature is self-existent, and can't be made: and what is finite and limited, may be multiplied; for there is nothing in its Nature and Idea to hinder it, if it find a Maker; and the Wise Maker of the World thought fit to make many Creatures of the same Kind: and now he may bring in his Reasons, if he pleases, why God made so many Creatures of the same kind, to supply Mortality, or for mutual Help or Comfort, &c. but all these Reasons relate only to such Beings, as are made, and have a wise Cause, and I perfectly agree with him, that God has none of these Defects, and therefore none of these Reasons can make it necessary that there should be more Gods than one; but then he should have remembred, that God was not made, and therefore not made for any End; and this would have made him thought twice before he had added. *To suppose more Gods without assigning a final Cause for such a Supposition, is to imploy our Fancy and Invention (to assign no Cause) not to exercise our Reason, his to amuse our selves with Conceits and Chimeras, not to Philosophize.* You imagine more Gods without giving a Reason;

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whether final or declaratory. You ought to know that the proper Name for this is *Whimsie*.

But I want a Name for this Argument, only I think it is neither Reason nor Philosophy, to talk of assigning a final Cause, why there is a God, either one or more.

A final Cause is the Reason and End, for which any thing was made; but that which was not made, could be made for no end; and therefore it is absurd to talk of the final Cause of a necessary and eternal Being.

But though he has managed these two Arguments at such a rate, that no Man has any reason to reverence him as an infallible Dictator, either in Philosophy or Religion, yet we allow him, what he would have, that two Gods are more than we have any need of, and that there is not the same Reason for more Gods than One, that there is for a Number of Creatures, of each kind; and what then? What then? A sure that is very evident, that there can be no more than three all-perfect, all-sufficient Spirits, than three Gods. Right! not three such all-perfect, all-sufficient Spirits, as are three Gods; but what does he think of Three, each of which is an all-perfect, and all-sufficient Spirit, and all Three but one Divinity, one God? But one Spirit, who is really all-sufficient and all-perfect, is enough to all Purposes and Intents whatsoever. I grant, One Divinity is so; but if this One Divinity essentially and necessarily subsists in Three, in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, each of which is an all-perfect, and all-sufficient Spirit, and yet but one whole undivided Divinity, one all-perfect, all-sufficient Being, these Three are not more than enough, not redundant and superfluous in the Divinity; and therefore he should have proved, that by the same Reason, that three absolute, independent, self-originated Divinities are superfluous and needless; three Divine Persons, of the same one undivided Divinity,

vinity, are superfluous too. Three Divinities, three separate self-originated Divine Essences and Natures, are superfluous; but I hope one Divinity, one Divine Nature and Essence is not: and if three Divine Persons are Essential to one undivided and inseparable Divinity, I hope they are not superfluous neither: and this is the Catholick Faith: not three Gods, or three Divinities, but three Persons in one infinite, undivided, Nature and Essence. Three, which never did subsist, never did, never can act apart, and therefore though three, are but one all-wise omnipotent Agent; and one omnipotent is not more than enough.

But, none of these Imperfections which are the Reasons, why Beings of the same Kind are multiplied; are found in any one of these all-perfect, all-sustaining Spirits. Very true, but the same one whole perfect Divinity is found in them all, and therefore though they are three, the Divinity is not multiplied, but they are One God; and this is all we are to account for: those who believe but one God, I hope, need not give a Reason, whether final or declaratory, why there are more; but if he expects a Reason, why there are three living, subsisting, omniscient, omnipotent, Persons in this one undivided God-head, a final Reason I can give none, for I have learnt to give no such Reasons of a necessary and eternal Nature; a declaratory Reason, as he calls it, I can give, because our Saviour has assured us, that so it is, and has given Command to his Ministers to baptize in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Thirdly, And this answers his third Argument, that the Works of Creation, though they prove the Being of a God, yet give us not the least Intimation of more Gods than One: We own the Argument against a Plurality of Gods; but now for the Application: He says, this is a direct a Proof against our professing more Infinite and ab-

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mighty Spirits. Of one such Mind or Spirit, the Works of Creation are a clear Demonstration, but they shew us not the least Foot-steps or Track of more such Spirits and Minds. [Or of three such Divine Almighty Persons;] and I know not how they should, when as the Realists themselves profess, these three are but one essential Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, and therefore but one Maker and Governour of the World.

But he thinks, that if there were more than One such Mind or Spirit, or as we say, infinite Person, who is an infinite and all-mighty Mind, *that also would have been made known to us, either by the Works of Creation or Providence, that are visible to all, because all are concerned to know it.* But though there were (as we profess to believe) three such Divine Persons in the Unity of the God-head, yet he knows according to our Principles, the Works of Creation could give no such Notice of any distinction of Persons in the God-head, because the Father makes all Things by his Word and Spirit, by an undivided and undistinguished Wisdom and Power, and when these Divine Persons have not distinct and separate Parts in the Creation, it is impossible, that this visible Frame of Nature should distinguish them; and therefore this Distinction cannot be learnt but by Revelation.

Nor consequently were all Men concerned to know this, till God thought fit to reveal it; It was sufficient in a meer State of Nature to worship the Maker of the World with an undistinguisht Devotion: but the Redemption of Mankind by the Incarnation and Death of the Son of God, and by the Sanctification of the Spirit, made the Revelation of this Mystery necessary; and though the Works of Creation did not visibly distinguish the Divine Persons, yet the Work of Redemption does, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, have their distinct Parts and Offices in this Glorious Work, and such as prove each of them

them to be a distinct Person, and each Person to be true and perfect God ; but this Author will not stand the Trial of Revelation : for he tells us plainly, that the Doctrine of the *Trinity* (for that is all he means by three Minds and Spirits) is a *Point of so much Importance, and so general Concernment, that were it true, it must have been found, where all other necessary Parts of Religion are registered; in the Works of Creation, or the Methods of Providence, or the congenit Notions, which are inseparable from our rational Natures.* Here he speaks out, and we thank him for it ; he hath done with all Revelation, excepting where there is the least need of it, *viz.* such Matters as may be known without a Revelation ; and now he has pulled off his Disguise, it is time for all Christians to have done with him. He has hitherto concealed himself under the Character of a *Nominalist*, and according to his own Rule he ought to shew us this *nominal Trinity registered in the Works of Creation, or the Methods of Providence, or those congenite Notions, which are inseparable from our rational Natures:* and when he has done this, we will shew him a *Trinity* of real proper subsisting Persons.

As for what he adds, that our Saviour tells us, *God is (not three Spirits) but a Spirit,* it is like all the rest: *Spiritus* there, as in many other Places, signifies the *Nature*, not the *Person*, and therefore these are not contradictory Propositions; *God is a Spirit,* and there are Three in the Unity of the God-head, each of which is infinite Mind and Spirit.

SECT. VI.

The Defence this Author makes for the Nominalists, against the Objections of the Realists.

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THIS Author having, as he thinks, sufficiently exposed the *Trithemistick* Trinity of the *Realists*, proceeds to vindicate the *Nominalists* from those Exceptions, which are made against them: I need say little more to this, than to explain that Defence he makes for them; and leave the Persons concerned to vindicate themselves from his Vindication, which seems to me a very scandalous one.

1. The first Objection is, That the Explanation (of the *Nominalists*) is a bare-faced yielding the long-controverted Question of the Trinity, to the *Sabellians* and *Samolatanians*, and consequently to the *Socinians*, who differ in nothing from *Noetus*, *Sabellius*, and *Paul of Samolara*; (they are near of Kin indeed, but there is some difference between them.) The God of the *Sabellians* and *Socinians*, and the God (or pretended) Verbal Trinity of the *Nominals*, is perfectly the same: the latter have explained away the Trinity to the former. The three Divine Persons of the *Nominals*, do all make but one Divine Person of the *Socinians* and *Sabellians*. This is certainly true, (as he explains the Doctrine of the *Nominals*, which, I hope, they can give a better account of) but for fear some Men should not believe it, he takes great pains to prove that it is so. Now this is a very formidable Objection: for if the *Nominals* have revived *Sabellianism* and *Socinianism*, they have been condemned many hundred Years since by
all

all those Catholick Fathers and Councils, who condemn-
ed Noetus, Sabellius, Photinus, Paulus Samosatenus, and
such like *Apostatizing Hereticks*. And this justifies
the *Readers* and undoes all that he has hitherto been
doing; for there is no *Middle* between a Real and a No-
minal Trinity, a Trinity of three real, living, subsisting,
Persons, and One living, subsisting Person, with a Tri-
nity of Names, Offices, Modes, or immanent Acts, and
therefore as far as the Authority of the Catholick Church
reaches, the Condemnation of a *Sabellian* and *Nominal*
Trinity must justify a Trinity of real subsisting Persons.
And what now does he answer to this? Why he owes
it, and says the *Socinians* at length see it, and hope to
make their Advantage of it: That it is indeed an *invidi-
ous Objection*, and that is the whole strength of it: *Invidious*,
I confess, it is, because all sincere Christians abhor these
Names; and it would in a great measure put an end to
this Controversie, were our People satisfied, that a *Nomi-
nal Trinitarian*, and *Socinian*, perfectly agreed in renoun-
cing the true Catholick Faith of the Trinity; though the
Nominalist still retains the Name of Trinity and Persons;
which the *Socinians* have hitherto rejected, but are now wil-
ling to use them for Peace sake, since they learn from these
Men, that they signifie nothing, and that the Church ne-
ver intended to signifie any thing real by them. This is
what he tells us with great Triumph: Our English *Soci-
nians* claim in their Writings, that they are the *Disseve-
ners*, that the *Fend* between the Church and them was ill-
grounded. For that, in very deed, both (the *Nominals*,
whom he calls the Church, and the *Socinians*) say the same
thing: As they pretend to this Honour, so they are suffi-
ciently paid, in that themselves have the whole Benefit of it;
They may enjoy thereby that Peace and Tranquillity, that
Ease and Security from the Laws themselves, which they her-
etofore were persecuted for bringing in, and so

fore owed to the Indulgence, or Connivence of Princes and Magistrates.

This now is very plain dealing, and I hope will be a fair warning to all serious Christians, how they suffer themselves to be cheated out of their Faith by the loud, groundless Out-cries of *Tritheism*, or imposed on by the old Catholick Names of Trinity, and Persons, without that Catholick Sense in which the Church always used those Words.

And I think those Persons to whom this Author affixes the Name of *Nominals*, if they be not *Sabellians* and *Socinians*, (which God forbid) ought to vindicate themselves from this heavy Imputation, and not only deny the Charge, but so explain themselves, as to let us see, wherein their Doctrine concerning the Trinity, differs from the old condemned Heresies of *Sabellius*, *Photinus*, and *Socinus*: And I doubt not but this will produce a much happier Agreement, and put an end to this scandalous Distinction between Real and Nominal *Trinitarians*.

Page 57.

2. But our Author is much more troubled with the second Objection: *That the Predications, or (as others speak) Attributions given in Holy Scripture, and by the Catholick Church to the Divine Persons, seem not well to consist, or to be intelligible, on the Hypothesis or Explication of the Nominals.*

His Instance concerns the Son or second Person in the Trinity, who is called God, and we say he was Incarnate, and all things were made by him: In some places an Omnipresence, in others Omnipotence and Omniscience are ascribed to him. But how can we (with any tolerable Propriety) say, that a meer reflex Wisdom is God, created all things, was incarnate, is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent? Or how can any of these things be affirmed of, or applied to our Saviour, in regard of the Incarnate or inhabiting Logos,

Logos, or reflex Wisdom: the which also how it should be incarnate, will be another unaccountable, unintelligible Paradox.

This is a very notable Objection; he has brought the Nominals on, let him see how he can bring them off again.

Now, in the first place, he is not willing to own, that any such things as these are said of Christ, and therefore tells us, *We should do well to consider the Interpretations of the Texts, wherein these things are said, or seem to be said.* And here he is at his old Trade of admiring his *Critical Interpreters*, whom he prefers much before Divines; and of disparaging those Copies we have of the Scriptures; the Mystery of which is, That some Critics give up some Texts of Scripture, out of Wantonness and Vanity, which the Catholic Church always thought good Proofs of the Divinity and Incarnation of our Saviour; and he thinks it a better way to judge of the sense of Scripture, by some new Critical Pointings, or the Mistakes of some old Copies, which may furnish them with various Readings, than by the whole Series of the Discourse, and the Traditional Interpretations of the Catholic Church; but I shall not dispute this Matter now.

He is certainly so far in the right, that the safest way of answering all this, is to deny it all; and this is what he means, when he says, *It were easy to make such an Application of this Reflection, as would (perhaps) offend many, but would (for all that) be most true.* Page 58.

Now I would only ask the Nominalists, how they like this way of answering these difficulties, by criticizing away all the Proofs of the Divinity and Incarnation of Christ? This their pretended, but treacherous Friend, says is the best and truest way, and he is a Man of Skill in these Matters, and seems to be ashamed of any other An-

ever, but this, which will unavoidably entangle him in unacceptable and unintelligible Paradoxes. I verily persuade myself, that many of those, whom this Author calls *Nominals*, abhor the Thoughts of this, and therefore ought freely and openly to declare themselves in this Matter, and not to suffer this bantering *Socinian* to impose upon the World in their Names.

Page 59.

But if this Answer don't please our Author, he answers for them, as good as the full *Deist*, says he, distinguish the two Natures in Christ, his Divinity and Humanity, and rightly understand the Doctrine of the Incarnation. This looks very promisingly; for, to acknowledge two Natures in Christ, and rightly to understand the Doctrine of the Incarnation, will rectify all other Mistakes. Let us then hear what he has to say of this. As to the Incarnation, every body knows, that the most Learned Interpreters, do not limit the Incarnation to the Person of the Logos or Son: But they say, the whole Divinity, or as St. Paul speaks, the fulness of the God-head (was incarnate, or) dwelt in Christ.

Who these most learned Interpreters are, I can't tell, unless he meant the *Patripassian* Hereticks; for all Catholic Christians believe only the Incarnation of the Person of the Son, and that neither the Father, nor the Holy Spirit were incarnate in the Incarnation of Christ.

But can we deny, that the whole Divinity, the fulness of the God-head was incarnate, or dwelt in Christ? I answer, This is meer Fallacy: for the whole Divinity may signify either *Essentially* or *Personally*: The *pia Deists*, the One whole Divinity is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the same perfect Divinity, subsisting whole and indivisible in each of them, that they are all Three but One Divinity, or One God; and thus the whole Divinity was not incarnate

incarnate in Christ: But then, as Christ in his own Person is true and perfect God, so the fulness of the God-head was incarnate in him, which is all St. Paul means.

But will this Author in good earnest allow, that God was incarnate in Christ, and that Christ was in One Person, both God and Man? Hold there a little: They do not mean, he says, that God was so incarnate, as so dwells in the Humanity of Christ, but he is not *any* every where else: and whoever said he was? But is he so incarnate, as to be truly God-Man in One Person, as the Soul and Body are One Man? No! no! but only this, Christ is perfect God in respect of God in him; because, or as God is perfect God in whatsoever Place or Person he is: God is perfect God in the least Point of Space, no less than in never so large a Portion of Extension: And this is all the Mystery of the Incarnation: and thus God, the fulness of the God-head, is as much incarnate in every Man in the World, as he was in Christ; for God is every where, and is perfect God, where-ever he is.

Thus I have endeavoured to unmask this Author, to let the World see, who they are that make their Advantage of these Disputes: His very Expedients for Peace shew how unwilling he is to have this Controversie silenced, which should teach all the sincere Lovers of the Catholick Faith, who heartily believe in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Three Persons and One God, not to lose the Faith in a Contention about Words, nor give a handle to our Enemies, to represent our Faith as uncertain, various, or heretical, when under different Forms of Speech, we may, and I hope do mean the very same thing.

The Learned Bishop of Worcester, whose Discourse in Vindication of the *Trinity* I have just now received, has undertaken this Charitable Work, and I hope his Great Judgment,

Judgment, Learning, and Authority, more than sufficient
if, not to make all Men speak and think alike, but at least
to prevent their charging each other with such Errors,
as they all abhor, and which their Words fairly and candid-
ly expounded, are by no means chargeable with, as that
excellent Person thinks, neither Side is, and I wish with all
my Heart, he may be in the right: And this would soon qua-
lifie our Differences; for did it once appear, that we
all mean the same thing, the Dispute about Words would
die of it self, and our common Adversaries could no
longer conceal themselves under a Disguise, but must
take their old Name of *Socinians* again.

FINIS.

